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# ESCHATOLOGY

OR

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST THINGS

ACCORDING TO THE CHRONOLOGY AND  
SYMBOLISM OF THE APOCALYPSE

BY

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*The Psalms Chronologically Arranged with Historical Introductions, The History and Geography of Palestine, The Commentary on the Book of Psalms, etc.*

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Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written ; for the time is at hand. *Rev. 1. 3.*

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TO

THOSE WHO ARE

"LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE, AND THE GLORIOUS  
APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD AND OUR  
SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST :"

TO

"ALL WHO LOVE HIS APPEARING :"

THIS LATEST WORK OF ONE WHO, ON THE VERGE OF FOURESCORE  
YEARS, WATCHES AND WAITS IN JOYFUL EXPECTATION OF  
"THE COMING," IS HUMBLY AND PRAYERFULLY

Dedicated.



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# ESCHATOLOGY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS.

THE word eschatology does not appear in Holy Scripture, but is the name, or title, given to that department of biblical theology which embraces the knowledge of the last events in the consummation of the mediatorial government, or, as it is also called, the gospel kingdom. The word is compounded of *ἔσχατος*, the *last*, the *uttermost*, the *end*, and *λόγος*, *word*, or *doctrine*, and when applied to times, or events, or epochs, means the *doctrine*, or *events*, of the *last times*, as in John vi, 40, 44, 54; 2 Tim. iii, 1, and about twelve times in other places equally direct. But in such places, or connections, the word "day" or "days" is not to be taken as solar days, but of preordained prophetic epochs, in which all events shall have reached their termini, and prophecies their fulfillment. The phrase "last day," or "last time," therefore, reaches down the entire period of consummation of the gospel plan, the end or final purpose of the gospel scheme, when God shall have finished his dispensation of grace to man; when the mediatorial administration of moral government shall end, and the restitutive process shall accomplish its purpose.

Eschatology, therefore, is a legitimate and most indispensable branch of theology, and must supply the true gauge and moral value of all doctrines relating to moral government and redemption. And as all its

particular subjects are purely matters of written revelation, leaving nothing to mere speculation, so all our knowledge of them is, and must be, purely exegetical. All speculation not in accord with sound exegesis is irreverent, misleading, and ruinous. The only question is, What does the oracle say?

Various particular topics have been placed in the category of the "last things" which we cannot here examine, but will treat them in their places. We shall chiefly limit our inquiry to the following; to wit, The downfall of antichrist, the millennium, the second coming of Christ, the intermediate state, the resurrection, the marriage of the Lamb, the general judgment, the new creation, the restitution accomplished, the kingdom delivered up. These will not all be treated in their fullness of evidence, but will receive attention so far as they correlate with central themes. In the midst of all, and as the "Alpha and Omega" to all, stands, in awful and beautiful grandeur and glory, the ever-blessed doctrine of the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which is our chiefest theme. God, with whom all things are as present, knows the future as the past, and has been pleased to unveil the future, to a given extent, for the patience, faith, and hope of the Church, and for the admonition of all. He also knows the alienating influence of unbelief, and how to rally and sustain the faith of the Church. In these future and apparently far-off prophecies he calls his people to consider the fundamental thought that the future, past, and present are alike before his all-comprehensive knowledge. Thus he speaks: "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." And again: "Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am

the last." And again: "Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he." Isa. xliv, 6; xlviii, 12; xli, 4. The "I am the first and the last" is Israel's warrant that the things foretold shall surely come in their time.

Thus also Christ appropriates these same divine prerogatives and functions to himself: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev. i, 8. "These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." Rev. ii, 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Rev. xxii, 13. The object of these asseverations of all-comprehensive knowledge, especially the form of "I am the first and the last," is to inspire faith in the prophetic utterances of God and of Christ, in equal degree of assurance which they had of the historic past. The plan of divine revelation has ever been to preserve a faithful record of historic events, so far as the purposes of redemption required, and to unfold the future so far as could subserve the same end. The memory of God's past intervention to save and establish his people was necessary to support their faith. Their equal faith in his future promises and predictions with that in the historic past was necessary to sustain their hope. God is sovereign of all times, present, past, and future, and his purposes are in the hands of Christ for execution. It is in this light, and with this faith, we are to study and believe the unfulfilled prophecies, resting in the promissory words of Christ: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand." Rev. i, 3.

It must be further premised that the fulfillment of prophecy is successive, and of the nature of a development. The advancement of gospel truth and the suppression of error, the triumph of righteousness in the earth and the overthrow of evil, are to be gradual, according to a wise arrangement, in agreement with moral laws and the methods of moral reformation.

In biblical theology, especially in the department of unfulfilled prophecy, it is of indispensable importance to keep before the mind the exact order and limits of the dispensational epochs. In all the successive dispensations there is given a fulfillment of prophecies pertaining to the period then present, and an outlook of the future by prophecies to be fulfilled in their time. Thus, gradually and successively, the great plan of salvation has been unfolded and apprehended and accepted. History is the only and sufficient exponent of prophecy. When the time of fulfillment shall have come the circumstances and events will explain what before might have been obscure, though the body and substance of the oracle is ascertainable from the beginning. No book of the sacred canon is more rich and clear and various than this. None surpass it in descriptions of Christ in his mediatorial rule and kingship, his sovereignty over the nations, his judgment on the enemies of the cross, the sufferings from persecutions, or public afflictions of the Church. Not infrequently the symbols denote direct persecution of the Church. In all cases the ultimate effect upon the progress of the kingdom of Christ is the aim and result to be kept in view. Every "seal" or "trumpet" or "vial" will have its effect chiefly within its own period, and Christ knows its force and fitness. All is weighed in the balances, and the omniscient Watchman knows at any hour "what of the night."

Of the types and prophecies of the Mosaic economy Christ has openly declared that “till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” Matt. v, 18. This is a sufficient warrant that each period will receive its literal completion within its allotted time.

In the order of the epochs the present—the Christian epoch—is the last. No prophecy reaches beyond. “Till he come” marks, with its immediate concomitants, the terminus of all prophecy, all gospel institution, all probation of man. Beyond that all is eternity, destiny, finality. “Then cometh the end.” The sphere of eschatology, or the doctrine of the last things, therefore, dates and terminates the Christian epoch. Strictly speaking, it opens with the Pentecost of A. D. 33. Acts ii. Then, by the public outpouring, the miraculous fullness of the Holy Ghost began, as a dispensational epoch, “the last times.” John says, “Little children, it is the *last time*: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the *last time*.” 1 John ii, 18. Paul says, “In these *last days* God hath spoken unto us by his Son.” “In the *last times* some shall depart from the faith.” “This know, also, that in the *last days* perilous times shall come.” “It is not for you to know the *times* and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.” Heb. i, 2; 1 Tim. iv, 1; 2 Tim. iii, 1; Acts i, 7. These are general cautions.

It is not to be wondered at that the germs or seeds of iniquity, which culminated in the great apostasy, should “already work” in the apostles’ times. But being fully assured that the destinies of the Church are in the Saviour’s hands, all heaven joined in the victor’s chant, “Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the

Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature . . . heard I, saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Rev. v, 12, 13.

Thus, in brief, Christ is again revealed to the universe as "the Head of the Church," the "King of kings and Lord of lords;" and now that the redemption of the Church is in our own Mediator's hands, they shall yet triumph, and shall reign with him on the earth. It was a timely vision and revelation. The apostles, except John, had finished their earthly mission. John is soon to follow. Who, then, of all the prophets or apostles shall represent the Church and deliver the holy oracles? A new dispensation is opening, the Church is to walk by faith in the written word, and by the spiritual presence of Christ in the Church, and by the conscious experience of a present salvation by the Holy Spirit.

Peter thus commends their faith and fidelity under their new trial; namely, that they "might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: *whom having not seen, ye love*; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." 1 Pet. i, 7, 8. To no books are we more indebted for our ideas of heaven and the future life than to this; to none are we more indebted for correct ideas of church life in its purity, authority, and honor.

First of all, in this unfolding drama, Christ appears and commands John: "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." Rev. i, 19. Here are three distinct parts of John's commission: (1.) To "write the

things which he had seen;" that is, the vision embraced in Rev. i, 10-20. (2.) To write "the things which are;" that is, the historic present, as to the state of the churches, given in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation. (3.) To write "the things that shall be hereafter." This last embraces the prophetic part of the entire book, and is thus repeated and individualized after the messages to the seven churches of Asia had been given. Thus John records: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, *and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.*" Rev. iv, 1. Here, then, dates the prophetic part of the Apocalypse.

As our business is with the prophetic part we can only state that the messages to the seven churches present a state of contrariety of elements which, to the eye of the apostle, but far more to the mind of the "Spirit," augurs doubt for the future results. This mixing of truth with error, of "the flesh and the Spirit," could not long co-exist with a sound system of doctrine and discipline. Two only of the seven churches, Smyrna and Philadelphia, were found to be without fault; five were variously admonished and threatened.

The great revivals during the first century unavoidably brought into the churches a vast amount of undisciplined disciples. Great efforts were made to unite Christianity to Mosaism on the one hand, or to the pagan philosophy on the other. The apostolical epistles abound in admonitions and instructions on these points. The "seven churches" were, in their geographical, and not less their central dialectical, position, exposed to this assault, or perhaps decoy, of the enemy.

“Grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock,” says St. Paul. “Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Acts xx, 29, 30.

The apostles foresaw the danger, and the seven churches were selected from the many by the Lord and Bishop of souls in order that, being forewarned, they might also be forearmed against the danger. “For even apostolical power and vigilance were not sufficient to release the Church of the beginning from the process of development in human freedom. Even the apostolical Church, in this immediately following stage, which we may term the Johannean, bore in it, concurrently with its strength of faith and faithfulness of love, the beginnings and types of all future apostasy and corruption, down to the Laodicean lukewarmness of the last days. For this, the territory of the church of Asia Minor, so variously made up of peculiar characteristics, was a most apt and appropriate emblem; and hence it was the historically existing, and not arbitrarily chosen, type of all the future.

“It follows from all this, as indeed from the fact of these epistles being sent to these churches, that the words of praise and censure, of consolation and exhortation, which were appropriately addressed to each of them, will approve themselves applicable in all similar circumstances of the progressive Church. This is even the plain and obvious meaning which the Holy Ghost, in this relatively very comprehensible introduction of the dark books of prophecy, suggests to all individual souls. The churches which rise *successively* are in some sense always simultaneously existent also, though not always stamped so distinctively as in these seven types.”\*

\* Stier’s *Words of the Lord Jesus*, vol. ix, pp. 109, 110.

Chapters iv and v engross the solemnities of the introduction of Christ upon the scene, as the only Being vested with power to govern the nations and protect the Church. John says: "I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon." The book contained the history and destiny of the Church. John understood it, and hence his "much weeping." "And one of the elders [that is, princely ones] said unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. . . . And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." Rev. v, 1-5, 7.

Upon this taking the book, the signal of investiture of sovereign power over the hostile nations, and of the certain final victory of the Church, all heaven joined in devout songs and thanksgiving. The same universal power and dominion were assumed by the Saviour just before his ascension. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matt. xxviii, 18. And previously: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son," "and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." John v, 22, 27.

The assurance now being given of the presence and ability of the Lord Jesus Christ to lead the Church and bring her to a triumphant end of all her conflicts, the celestial choristers, and the whole body of the heavenly

world, unite to celebrate the joyful occasion, saying : “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: *and we shall reign on the earth.*”

Mark the pure millennial trait of this millennial and celestial chant. It describes the results attained and recorded in the “book;” results which are to be realized “on the earth,” and the Church shall be in the highest honor, even as “kings and priests,” “redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Vers. 9, 10. It must be remembered that whenever the saints are represented as giving a chant in heaven they celebrate by giving in song the chief end and scope of their vision, and the specific object attained or to be attained. Nothing is done at random, or in general, or promiscuously.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE EPOCHS OF THE SEALS.

The First Seal—Second Seal—Third Seal—Fourth Seal—Fifth Seal—  
Sixth Seal.

THE date of the new prophetic “book,” or roll (chap. v, 1), is at the close of the first century. The method of revelation is gradational and highly dramatic. The whole time covered by the prophecy is divided into epochs and subepochs, named and designated by “seals,” “trumpets,” and “vials.” These are to follow each other in strict chronological order. The language is greatly symbolic, and the symbols are to be interpreted by the known laws of scriptural usage. The symbols are almost wholly from the Old Testament. A fundamental law of interpretation is, that events portrayed must be viewed in their light and influence as affecting for good or evil the true Church. This is the touchstone which determines the prophetic importance of all events whatsoever. Sometimes an epoch may be distinguished by the prevalence of war, sometimes of famine, or pestilence, or of great political changes. These have a secondary relation to the common cause.

The first six seals of this group cover about two hundred and thirty-four years, extending from about A. D. 340. It includes the age of Constantine the Great, who died A. D. 337. The great moral events of this period are the extension of the Gospel over the known civilized world; it embraces also eight of the ten notable Gentile persecutions, also the completion of the downfall of the Jewish power of persecution; the

conversion to Christianity of the Roman emperor, Constantine the Great ; the irrecoverable fall of the pagan power of persecution throughout the Roman Empire, and the establishment by law of the Christian Church in her civil rights, freedom, and honor. These are events of great significance. But let us view the subject more in detail.

I. *The First Seal* John thus describes: “And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four living creatures saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.” Rev. vi, 1, 2.

It is scarcely needful to say that the general import of this first seal is that of the rapid spread of the Gospel. The strength and agility of the horse have made it proverbially terrible in war in all ages, and hence it becomes a symbol of war. But a “white” horse is an emblem of *purity, joy, and victory*; that is, it is specific of a holy or evangelical victory. The “bow” is also a symbol of war, and the “crown” denotes kingly sovereignty; the leader is a king. The phrase “conquering, and to conquer,” means rapid and successive victories. It was meet to open the scenes with an encouragement to the Church. The idea of prolonged military life, though triumphant, is yet a life of hardship, unrest, and self-denial. It is sufficient to say that, upon the death of John, the Revelator, the Church was left without a visible headship and leader. The apostles having finished their work, the Church was left with a written revelation, the Holy Spirit, and well-attested evidence of Christian experience to guide and establish its members. They had not, as afterward, the wisdom of centuries to confirm them in well-defined

scriptural doctrine, though they did enjoy the all-sufficient promise, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age.” Matt. xxviii, 20. And in this walking by faith, and resting upon the promise of a divine spiritual agency, they moved out before all the world, and at the peril of persecution, as Christ’s witnesses, they bore the ensign of the cross. The persecutions sifted the Church, but did not check its growth.

The symbols of the first seal do not cover any definable length of time, but stand forth as a public attestation of readiness for action on the part of the Church, and of an uncompromising faith and purpose to stand by the cross. The latter part of the second century the Christian Church had been planted, in various degrees of strength, in all Europe, in Northern Africa, and in Asia as far as Persia; perhaps, by the St. Thomas Christians, in India.

II. *The Second Seal*: “And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him who sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.”

As the “white horse” in the first seal denoted purity, joy, and righteousness in the methods and aims and nature of the conquests, so now the “red horse” indicates bloody war, and “the great sword” given to him that sat on the horse was his commission to “take peace from the earth.” The period denoted by the second seal is brief. John, the Revelator, was released from his Patmos prison after the death of Domitian, A. D. 96, and about ten years later, under the emperor Trajan’s reign, the flames broke out afresh.

Among the notable victims of this bloody persecution

was the great and good Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch. Trajan was on his way to the Parthian War, and stopped at Antioch in Syria, where he had an interview with Ignatius. In the course of the interview Ignatius had spoken of "*Christ in him.*" "Dost thou then carry in thy bosom him that was crucified?" sternly demanded the emperor. Ignatius replied, "I do; for it is written 'I will dwell in them and walk in them.'" "Then," replied Trajan, "since Ignatius says that he carries within himself him that was crucified, we command that he be carried bound by soldiers to great Rome, there to be thrown to the wild beasts for the entertainment of the people."

The severity of the persecution was checked somewhat by the consideration of the great numbers of the Christians. The proconsul of Bithynia, the younger Pliny, in a letter to Trajan, says: "Many of all ages and every rank, of both sexes, are accused and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country."

The persecution continued under Adrian, his successor, A. D. 117, and is generally called the fourth Gentile persecution. Antoninus Pius came to the throne in A. D. 139 or 140, and terminated the persecution of the Christians. In his message to the Common Council of Asia he closes his mandate thus: "If any person will still persist in accusing the Christians merely as such, let the accused be acquitted, though he appear to be a Christian, and let the accuser be punished." This closed, for the present, the bloody page of martyrdom. But the Church had still flourished and extended her borders. Devout men sold their possessions and gave to the poor, and went into parts hitherto unvisited by evangelists and raised up new churches. The pros-

perity of the Church resulted from two causes—the devout consecration of all for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and the establishment of strict church discipline, protective of the victories already gained. The compact organism of church law and discipline made a sharp distinction between the Christian and heathen communities, and gave a bold front to her persecutors.

In A. D. 116 the Jews, who had been for years secretly preparing for a revolt from Gentile dominion, taking the opportunity of Trajan's absence to direct the war with the Parthians, and the withdrawal of the army from the West for that purpose, now burst forth suddenly in Egypt and quickly spread to Cyrene, Thebais, Cyprus, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and all parts whither the Jews had settled. An impostor, Barcochab, appeared among them with the profession of their Messiah, and vast multitudes rallied under his banner. For about nineteen years the countries were agitated and in peril. The loss of life was computed at five hundred and eighty thousand, besides those who died of famine, disease, fire, and other incidents of war.

At the close of the second century of the Christian era another civil war broke out in settlement of the title to the vacant throne. The disputants were Severus, on the one hand, against Julianus, Niger, and Albanus. It is not our plan to enter upon the details of these events; we can only mention them, and the reader can refer to them at leisure. But one thing must be kept before the mind, namely, that all these wars were cruel and bloody, naturally antagonizing the Gospel of peace, and keeping the public mind agitated with a sense of general insecurity. As the Saviour says on another occasion, "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

Luke xxi, 26. It is noticeable that the symbols of the second seal literally apply to the scenes we have given: “And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given him that sat on him to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill [ἀλλήλων] one another.” This is civil war.

III. *Third Seal*: “And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, Come and see. And I beheld a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hands. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.” Chap. vi, 5, 6.

The “*black horse*” is the symbol of *great mourning*; and the “*balances*” is not here the emblem of *equity* and *equality*, but of *scarcity* and *famine*. It was considered a great public calamity to be obliged to eat bread by weight. Thus Lev. xxvi, 26, “And when I have broken the staff of your bread, . . . they shall deliver you your *bread by weight*, and ye shall eat and not be satisfied.” And Ezek. iv, 16, 17, “Son of man, lo, I will break the staff of bread, and they shall eat bread by weight and with care.” And that blackness is an emblem of famine is clear; thus, “Our skin was black, like an oven, because of the terrible famine.” Lam. v, 10. But the text itself evidences that the famine is the peculiar type of the sufferings denoted: “A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.” The day-laborer would receive the “*penny*” (denarius); equal to fifteen cents with us, and only the wages for one day. Such is the famine that he can procure only one pint of wheat flour for his day’s wages. If he is paid in barley he obtains three pints.

This is wholly insufficient for subsisting an average family.

Toward the close of the second century a distressing famine raged in Rome, which brought on an insurrection for bread. Gibbon says of it, "Pestilence and famine contributed to fill up the measure of the calamities of Rome." "Two thousand died every day at Rome, during a considerable length of time."

IV. *Fourth Seal* : "And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold, a pale horse : and his name that sat upon him was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the wild beasts of the earth." Rev. vi, 7, 8.

This fourfold measure of divine judgments—the *sword*, *famine*, *death* (pestilence), and *wild beasts*—make the full complement of wrathful visitation. And thus it is construed by the prophet: "For thus saith the Lord; How much more when I send you four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast." Ezek. xiv, 21.

The word translated "hell," verse 8, is *ἀδητος, hades*, which should be rendered *grave*, or *region of the dead*. The "pale horse" and its rider, "Death," are emblems, not only of death, but of wide-spread desolation, followed up closely with the open grave, or region of the dead. The idea is that deaths are so frequent that there is no burial. Power is given to "Death" to "kill the fourth part of the earth," with "the sword, with hunger [famine], and with death [pestilence], and with the wild beasts of the earth." The population of

cities and villages would be so wasted that the wild beasts of the mountains would come down to devour the remnant of the people. This always followed great destruction of the inhabitants.

We may date the epoch of the fourth seal at about A. D. 211, after the death of Severus. Within a brief period four of the ten Gentile persecutions occurred. The political atmosphere was dark and threatening. The Roman Empire was fast waning and tottering to its fall. Most of the Roman emperors came to violent deaths. Civil wars were frequent. Disquiet prevailed. Besides thirty aspirants to the throne, there were sixteen acknowledged emperors within sixty years, from A. D. 211 to A. D. 270.

“This gloomy period of history has been decorated with inundations, earthquakes, uncommon meteors, preternatural darkness, and a crowd of prodigies, fictitious or exaggerated. But a long and general famine was a calamity of a more serious kind. It was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression which extirpated the produce of the present and the hope of future harvests. Famine is almost always followed by epidemical diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. Other causes must, however, have contributed to the furious plague which, from the year A. D. 250 to the year A. D. 265, raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family of the Roman Empire. During some time five thousand persons daily died in Rome, and many towns that had escaped the hands of the barbarians were entirely depopulated.” By authentic facts it was ascertained that “above half the people of Alexandria (Egypt) had perished.” “And could we venture to extend the analogy to the other provinces, we might suspect that war, pestilence, and famine had consumed, in a few years,

the moiety of the human species.”\* The historic facts require no further explanation of the symbolic imagery of this epoch.

V. *Fifth Seal*: “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given to every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” Rev. vi, 9-11.

This “seal,” as the language imports, unfolds the bloody page of persecution. The martyrs have fled to the altar (verse 5), as was the custom, as a last resort, for refuge and protection.† It was their final appeal for justice and for mercy. The “white robes” (verse 11) are emblems of purity and victory, and are here given as a pledge of final triumph.

We must date this fifth seal epoch at about A. D. 284. This is the date of the accession to the throne of the emperor Diocletian, under whose reign the Christians suffered the severest persecution they had ever been called to endure. It was in the year 302 that his son-in-law, Galerius, instigated by the pagan priests, finally prevailed upon Diocletian to issue an edict against the Christians. This first edict aimed to destroy their places of worship, their books, their eligibility to civil office, and their civil rights generally. It was soon followed by a second edict, by which all bishops, pastors, teachers, throughout the empire, were

\* Gibbon’s *Roman Empire*, vol. i, chap. x.

† See the custom referred to in 1 Kings i, 50, and ii, 28.

to be apprehended and imprisoned—thinking to destroy the Christians by destroying their leaders. A third edict ordered all sorts of torments to be used to force them to worship heathen gods and renounce Christ. Vast numbers hereby became victims to the most intolerant sufferings. The scourge spread throughout the Roman Empire. In A. D. 304 a fourth edict was published, commissioning magistrates to force all Christians, without distinction of age or sex, to sacrifice to the gods of Rome.

These edicts were strictly and zealously executed. “A learned French writer, M. Godean, computes that in this tenth persecution, as it is called, there were not less than seventeen thousand Christians *put to death in the space of one month*, and that during the continuance of it, in the province of Egypt alone, no less than one hundred and fifty thousand persons died by the violence of their persecutors, *and five times* that number through the fatigues of banishment, or in the public mines to which they were condemned.”\*

The persecution under the emperor Decius had been furious and without mercy, and extended, with some interruptions, from A. D. 249 to the time of Diocletian. The history of these times is written in blood. Humanity sickens at the atrocities committed under the authority of law. The persecution under the reign of Diocletian continued ten years, till A. D. 313.

VI. *Sixth Seal*: “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every

\* See Jones's *Church History*, p. 161.

mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi, 12-17.

This is not a final general judgment scene, as some have supposed. The symbols used are not suitable to such an event. Besides, the "seventh seal" epoch, with its "seven trumpets," and the "seven vials" are yet to come. The judgment-day scene is given in Rev. xx, 11-15, and Matt. xxv, 31-46, and elsewhere. The symbolism is intense, but does not outstep the awful grandeur of the occasion.\* In reading carefully the record of the sixth seal the mind is seriously impressed as with some great catastrophe into which the people

\* The following suggestions may suffice for a clew to the interpretation of the sixth seal. "Earthquake"—the word literally signifies a *shaking*, and symbolically it denotes a violent agitation of government, changing the whole phase of society. "Not," says Mete, "a destruction, but an extraordinary alteration of the state of things." Isa. xxv, 19-21; Hag. ii, 6, 7, 21, 22. "Sackcloth" is an emblem of *mourning*. 2 Sam. iii, 31; Psa. xxx, 11. "Blood" represents *death*, especially *slaughter*, or *punishment*. Gen. iv, 10; Isa. xxxiv, 3. "Stars" denote *princes*, *nobles*, persons high in office. Dan. viii, 10; Num. xxiv, 17. "Heaven," the *ruling power*, or *government*, whether civil or ecclesiastical. Thus Isa. xiv, 13, 14: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." "Heaven and earth" denote the political universe. Isa. li, 15, 16. In 2 Pet. iii, 13, "to look for a new heaven and a new earth" is to look for a new order or state of things in the moral and physical condition of our race. "Mountain" denotes *stronghold*, *power of protection*. Isa. iii, 23; also *government*. Isa. ii, 2.

and governments of the world are plunged, and from which there is no escape or mitigation. And such is the true impression. Kings and princes and governments and peoples of the earth are alike involved. To one division of the earth it is hailed as a world-wide blessing; to the other it is condoled and bewailed as the hopeless wreck of all they had sought or desired, augmented with the terrors of impending retribution.

In the beginning of the fourth century the Christians had become a power in the Roman Empire. It was considered that half the population were either Christians or believers in one God. Persecutions did not check their increase, though their growth was not uniform. The persecution under Diocletian, instigated by Galerius, first broke out in A. D. 302, which, as we have said, authorized the pulling down of all buildings of Christian worship, the burning all their books and writings, and depriving them of all their civil rights and preferments, but did not proceed to take life. But the following year the edict of Diocletian commanded all sorts of cruelties and forms of death. Soon after another edict followed, ordering all the bishops, pastors, and public teachers throughout the empire to be apprehended and imprisoned. Other edicts followed, ordering the worship of the gods of Rome, and commanding the severest cruelties by torture on all Christians. This state of things continued ten years, or till A. D. 313.

But God was working in the way of his own wisdom, and wonderfully, for the deliverance of his people, and this from an unexpected quarter. The provinces of Britain, Gaul, and Spain were ruled by Constantius Chlorus, a mild prince, and favorable to the Christians, and in his dominion there had been no persecution. Constantius died A. D. 306, and bequeathed his domin-

ion to his son Constantine, afterward known as Constantine the Great. An edict in favor of the Christians had been published in A. D. 312 by Constantine and Licinius, to which afterward Maximin also consented, favoring the Christians beyond any former precedent; and even Galerius, on his death-bed, issued a conciliatory letter to his people asking the prayers of Christians.

A little later, by a chain of wonderful providences, Constantine came to the undisputed and undivided throne of the Roman Empire, and immediately began his world-renowned career in establishing the Christian religion. At first paganism was tolerated, but it was afterward proscribed. Constantine ordered the heathen temples to be destroyed throughout the Roman Empire, A. D. 331, and paganism, as an organized religious body, was overthrown about A. D. 390, in the reign of Theodosius the Younger. Thus from the date of Constantine's accession to the sole sovereignty of the empire Christianity became the recognized religion of Rome, and paganism was at first only tolerated, not approved, but soon it lost all recognition or preferment. Thus ended forever the pagan rule and power of pagan persecution in the Roman Empire.

Thus terminated the sixth seal epoch. The wailing of all classes, as given in the symbolism and lively descriptions of the record, is the wailing of the pagans, their priests, their emperors, their philosophers, their princes, their officers of government, and their common people. Multitudes believed in the heathen superstitions, and multitudes of all ranks derived their support from the heathen religion and government. The lamentations and mourning are like those at the fall of mystic Babylon, the Harlot, given Rev. xviii, to which the attention of the reader is invited.

“From this account it appears that the pagan Roman emperors were deprived of their government and came to miserable ends ; that the pagan Roman Cæsars fell in battle, or were put to death; that the religion of the idolaters received a mortal wound, all the colleges of pontifices, augurs, vestals—in a word, all the pagan priests and religious officers throughout the empire—being under the power and dominion of a Christian prince ; that many of the pagan officers, civil and military, were displaced, and Christians put in their room ; that there was a thorough change in the government, and that paganism lessened by degrees, till it entirely disappeared ; that the greatest of the persecutors acknowledged and confessed the justness and cause of God’s judgments, and lastly, that upon this change, all the idolaters, upon account of their horrid cruelties against the Christians, could not but be in daily expectation of the severest punishments.”\*

\* Daubuz, quoted by Lowman on the place.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE EPOCHS OF THE TRUMPETS.

The First Trumpet—The Second Trumpet—The Third Trumpet—The Fourth Trumpet.

It will be noticed by the careful reader that after the sixth seal a pause or interval is made in the regular chronology of events. This interval is properly the prologue of the seventh seal. The symbolism of this prologue is briefly solved. Chap. vii, 1-3, the “four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth,” etc., denotes a period of peace and quiet among the nations. Wind, as a destructive force in nature, was one of the dreaded evils, and the holding of the winds that they should not blow is a fit emblem of peace. This was realized in the brief reign of Constantine. The sealing of “the servants of God” was an act denoting property, also a pledge of divine protection. This gives to the servants of God, in the midst of public war and confusion, a calm assurance of divine recognition and final reward. The numbers “twelve” and “one hundred and forty-four” (ver. 4) are representative, not absolute. The verses 9-17 are a most beautiful and tender inside representation of heaven, given to comfort the suffering Church in her mortal struggles against the convulsions of the earth.

In chapter viii, 1-6, we have further encouragement for the faithful. In verse 1, “When he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.” This silence may be in allu-

sion to the silent prayer of the temple worshipers, while the priest offered incense in the holy place, as some suppose (Luke i, 10); or, rather, as we would suppose, when the seventh seal was opened such was the impression of the first glance at the scenery that heaven stood awe-struck, we might say terror-struck, in “expressive silence.” Certain it is that the events of the seventh seal epoch would justify such a construction. And, furthermore, if the “silence” occurred simultaneously with the burning of the incense, then verse 3 should connect with verse 1, whereas the ceremony of distributing the trumpets to the seven angels now separates them.

The profusion of incense which the angel offered (verses 3, 4) was a fit emblem, and strong assurance, of the efficacy of prayer in all the trying hours of affliction; while the angel (verses 3, 4) “who took the censer, and filled it with fire of the [great] altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake,” assured the Church that not only men and nations, but the forces of nature, are in the hand of God, who will direct and control them at his will, and for the purposes of his glorious kingdom. “Thunder and lightnings, when they proceed from the throne of God (Rev. iv, 5) are fit representations of God’s glorious and awful majesty [and the resistless force of his vindictive judgments]; but when fire comes down from heaven upon the earth it expresses some judgment of God on the world, as in the prophecy (Rev. xx, 9), ‘and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.’”\*

Having then prepared the way for the further unfolding of the history of the Church, and having

\* Lowman, *in loc.*

divided the *Seventh Seal* epoch into seven trumpet epochs, we give the first trumpet as follows:

I. *First Trumpet Epoch*: “And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.” Rev. viii, 6, 7.

The interpretation of the trumpet epochs will be better understood by considering them in groups. Thus, the first four are one group, and the fifth and sixth are also a distinct group. The subepochs of the first four trumpets extend over a period of about two hundred and thirty-two years, from the death of Constantine, 337, till the birth of Mohammed, A. D. 569. This limitation of the period of the first four trumpets is further corroborated by the clearly established dates of the fifth and sixth trumpets, as we shall see, in their place.

Two events must be kept before the mind as results to be achieved in this period; namely, the downfall of paganism in the Roman Empire—a work begun but not completed—and the irretrievable fall and ruin of the Western or Latin branch of the Roman government. Pagan Rome had been hostile to the kingdom of Christ and cruel to the saints, and Christian Rome, though now nominally Christian, is early developing the genius and tendencies of her pagan ancestry in the characteristics of antichrist, “the man of sin.” For three hundred years she had persecuted that portion of the Church that sought a holier life, and she is now, in the chain of prophecy, within sixty-eight years of her catastrophe, and her downward progress is marked in blood.

Consider, further, that the Western or Roman half of

this empire was declining three hundred and fifty years before it fell, and the last one hundred years of that period the world was in almost perpetual war, attended and followed by famine, pestilence, and military oppression. The barbarous tribes of Northern Asia and Europe, from China to the Atlantic coast, which had been the terror of all the Southern nations from time immemorial, now came surging westward and southward to find food and cultivated lands. The Church and government, the people and their property, the works of art, the soil, the literature, and religion—all fell into the absolute power of these insatiate robbers. The European nations now existing have risen out of the ruins of the old Roman dominion.

The first trumpet period brings us to A. D. 395. The events lie within about forty years, from Constantine the Great to the death of the emperor Theodosius. The symbolism of this epoch (chap. viii, 7) denotes wars, destruction of property, scarcity of food, to the great distress of the nations.

Answering to this we have to record disgraceful and bloody civil wars in settling the empire among the sons of Constantine, which filled the nations with alarm and distress; so much so that within twenty-seven years from the death of Constantine his family became extinct in the death of Julian the Apostate. Meanwhile the Northern barbarians moved southward, and the empire is invaded chiefly by the Franks, Almans, Saxons, Quades, Sarmatians, and Persians. The public distress was so great that the pagans charged it upon the Christians in casting off the gods of Rome.

II. *The Second Trumpet Epoch* extends from Theodosius, A. D. 398, to the invasion of Africa by the Vandals, A. D. 425, and is thus given: “And the second trumpet sounded, and as it were a great mountain

burning with fire was cast into the sea : and the third part of the sea, became blood ; and the third part of the creatures that were in the sea, and had life, died ; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.” Rev. viii, 8, 9.

The symbolism of this trumpet denotes war ; the intense agitations of the nations ; the destruction of a great proportion of commerce—one of the arteries of national life, and the chief prevention of famine. The state of public alarm and agitation is compared to “a great mountain burning with fire and cast into the sea.”\*

It is impossible to give an adequate idea of the state at this time of the Roman Empire and of the Church in our brief limits, nor does it belong to our line of argument. Suggestive headings of thought, indicating to the reader the line of further investigation, is all we can do. Remember, these indices of the fortunes of the Roman Empire are not given for the worth or worthlessness of their political bearings, but for their relation to the Church, the kingdom of Christ, and the light which they afford to prophecy as to the final destiny of our race. God has a hand in history ; and nations and governments, war and peace, the forces of society and of individuals, things present and things remote are all subject to his modifying will.

With the events which occurred during the brief period of the second trumpet, and worthy of note here, we may record the terrible civil wars, conducted chiefly by Abrogates against Theodosius I., and subsequently

\* “Sea” denotes a body ; if at rest, it signifies national quiet : if agitated, it denotes war. “Ships” are the emblem of wealth by commerce. “Islands” signify depots of commerce. “Mountain” represents government, the ruling power. “A great mountain burning with fire and cast into the sea” is government in great commotion, as when merged in destructive war with doubtful results.

that of Gildo in Africa. From the North the Goths invade and ravage Greece and overrun Northern Italy. The extreme Northern Germans—the Vandals, Suevi, and Burgundians—descend upon the southern country and again overrun Northern Italy; then, uniting with the Alani, they commanded an army numbering two hundred thousand fighting men, and their women, children, and slaves increased the number to as much more. These came not merely for conquest, but for immigration and settlement. Indeed, north of the Alps the Roman dominion had now ceased. In A. D. 408 Rome itself was besieged till famine in the city and pestilence became fearfully prevalent, men and women often eating human flesh to escape the horrors of death by hunger. Thousands died, till there was no place to bury the dead. The pagan citizens complained that these calamities came in consequence of their having forsaken the gods of Rome. The barbarians were at length bought off at immense cost, and with an increase of their army invaded Gaul, Spain, and other provinces.

In these commotions the churches were largely vacated or ruined, government demoralized, commerce and enterprise greatly crippled—literally “a third part of the ships were destroyed,” and “a third part of the sea [population] became blood.” The city of Rome was besieged three times in about two years, and at the last was taken and sacked A. D. 410.

III. *The Third Trumpet Epoch* is from A. D. 425—the invasion of Africa by the Vandals—till the fall of the Western Roman Empire, A. D. 476. It is given in the language following: “And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the

star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died in the waters, because they were made bitter.” Rev. viii, 10, 11.

The symbols seem readily explicable. A single “star” represents supreme authority; a “star falling to the earth” imports loss of supreme dominion; “rivers” denote derived authority, emissary and dependent power. “Fountains of water” properly signify sources of living sustenance. “Wormwood” explains itself as being *bitter*. The epoch throughout is calamitous.

We can mention only some of its calamities. It is seen at once that the symbolism is bold, rare, and burdened with disaster. “Genseric, King of the Vandals, invades Northern Africa. Briton, abandoned by Rome, calls in the Saxons. A great battle is fought at Chalons, in which Atilla is said to have lost one hundred and seventy thousand men. He was able to bring into the field an army of five, according to another account of seven hundred thousand.” He was called “the terror of the world.” He invades Persia, attacks the Eastern Empire, ravaging as far as Constantinople. “In his Illyrian war the whole breadth of Europe, as it extends above five hundred miles from the Euxine to the Adriatic, was at once invaded and occupied and desolated by the myriads of barbarians whom Atilla led into the field.”\* The provinces of Thrace and Macedonia were ravaged without resistance and without mercy. Rome is taken and sacked. Within twenty years—from Maximus to Augustulus, the last emperor of the Western Empire—nine emperors had risen and fallen.

“The shooting star,” says Mede, “denoted the downfall of the Western Caesars.” Odoacer, King of the

\* Gibbon’s *Rome*, vol. iii, pp. 394–396.

Heruli, deposed Augustulus and put an end to the Western Roman Empire in A. D. 476.

The Roman dominion had existed 1229 years--from B. C. 753, when Isaiah and Hosea prophesied, and about sixty-six years after Jonah had preached in Nineveh. It was the most solid political and military structure the world had ever witnessed. Daniel trembled when he saw in vision and thus spake of it: "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it." Dan. vii, 7.

Another fact of world-wide importance should be noticed here; namely, the extinction of paganism throughout the Roman Empire. In A. D. 337, as we have seen, Constantine the Great established the Christian religion as the religion of the empire. This left paganism and pagans unsustained and unprotected by civil law. At first there were no laws forbidding the pagan worship, but it was only tolerated. Altars and temples and priests and victims and idols were in all the land, though their worship was greatly depressed and dishonored, because not sustained by public expense nor by public sentiment, while nominal Christianity was greatly increased and honored. The progress of sentiment in favor of Christianity was so great that the pagans largely performed their rites in secret while they nominally passed for Christians. In some places where the pagans were in majority they openly opposed and persecuted the Christians. The struggle was long and bitter, the Christians always in the ascendancy. Justinian at last suppressed paganism by law in 523 and 527. Thus paganism fell, after a struggle of

one hundred and ninety years from the decree of Constantine.\*

Another fact is of notable significance. When the barbarian hordes began to pour their myriads into the northern and southern provinces of the Roman Empire, they were struck with awe and admiration of the compact and imposing organization of the Church. It was an age of intense proselytism and unbounded aspiration of spiritual and ecclesiastical power. The bishops were attractive, bold leaders; the bishop of Rome was now the most influential man in Europe, and the Church presented a model of government and discipline not found in the military or civic spheres. Their exterior pomp and order impressed the senses with awe, and their influence and discipline became a bond of union to society when all else was anarchy and ruin. The barbarians, through the active zeal of the Church, soon received the elements of the Christian faith, submitted to baptism, and openly professed the Christian religion. However defective might have been their ideas of the new religion it was one step toward a higher civilization and a truer doctrine, and when society began to rise from the ruins of the Western Empire, and form new nationalities, these primordial elements became a formative and influential factor.

But just here we have cause to lament the unfaithfulness of the Church. Instead of holding up before all nations the pure apostolic standards of doctrine and duty, instead of fidelity to the Gospel of Christ in its spiritual, unselfish simplicity, the forms of antichrist are superinduced upon the doctrine and spirit of Christ and his apostles, till within and out of the true faith an ecclesiastical system grew up which became the most terrible and corrupting power and persecutor of the

\* *Vide* Neander's *History*, vol. ii, pp. 70-84.

true Church which the world ever saw. This will be noticed and described in the chapter on the “Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years of Antichrist.”

These remarks may seem a divergence from our proper theme, but they are germane to the event of the fall of the Western Roman Empire, and the providence of God over the Church and the subsequent nations. We now resume the notice of the trumpet periods.

IV. *The Fourth Trumpet* is thus announced : “And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars ; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!” Rev. viii, 12, 13.

The language of this epoch speaks only of sorrow, gloom, perplexity, and distress. The third part of all sources of social life and happiness is extinguished. The “sun,” representing the chief governing power, civil and religious ; the “moon,” the secondary officers standing nearest the throne; the “stars,” apparently to us the lesser agencies, yet indispensable ; these are in deepest mourning. “The sounding of the fourth trumpet,” says Dr. Hale, “introduced an eclipse of the third part of the sun, moon and stars. And the historian Cedrenus thus describes the aspect of the heavens in the reign of Justinian, A. D. 533, and ‘The sun appeared as the moon, shorn of his beams, as if *eclipsed*, and cast a gloom on all things during this year. At this time the world had no respite from war and death.’ And Gibbon remarks, that ‘the majesty of the Roman

Empire was but faintly represented by the princes of Constantinople.' The divine judgments were still to be inflicted on the Roman Empire, though Christian in name still pagan in religion and morals. The barbarous conquerors, 'associating Belial with Christ' blended their pagan idolatries and corruptions with the pure doctrines and precepts of Christianity.

"These superstitions and corruptions led to a new order of things, both in the Western and Eastern Empire. They paved the way for two furious fanatical ecclesiastical powers, which sprang up out of the ashes of paganism, both in the Western and Eastern Church, about the same time, and from similar causes ; namely, the two Christian heresies of *popery* and *islamism* ; which, however different from each other in some inferior features, yet agreed, 'like sisters,' in the predominant traits of hatred and persecution of all other sects but their own."\*

We may place the epoch of the fourth trumpet from the fall of the Western Empire, A. D. 476, till A. D. 604, the death of Gregory the Great, when the popes began to assume civil functions. It is an ominous index of the unfortunate times of which we are now speaking that "in the space of twenty years since the death of Valentinian [A. D. 457] nine emperors had successively disappeared."† Odoacer, the king of the Heruli, was "the first barbarian king who reigned in Italy." But his reign was short, for Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, conquered Italy, and founded a Gothic kingdom. Although Theodoric greatly mitigated the deplorable condition of Italy, yet in the twenty years of Odoacer's reign "his kingdom exhibited the sad prospect of misery and desolation. . . . In

\* Hale's *Analysis of Chron. Geog. Hist. Prophecy*, vol. iii, p. 609-11.

† Gibbon.

the division and decline of the empire, the tributary harvests of Egypt and Africa were withdrawn ; the numbers of the inhabitants continually diminished with the means of subsistence, and the country was exhausted by the irretrievable losses of war, famine, and pestilence. The plebeians of Rome, who were fed by the hand of their master, perished as soon as his liberality was suppressed ; the decline of the arts reduced the industrious mechanic to idleness and want, and the senators, who might support with patience the ruin of their country, bewailed their private loss of wealth and luxury. One third of those ample estates to which the ruin of Italy is originally imputed is extorted for the use of the conquerors. Injuries were aggravated by insults ; the sense of actual suffering was embittered by the fear of more dreadful evils, and as new lands were allotted to new swarms of barbarians each senator was apprehensive lest the arbitrary surveyors should approach his favorite villa or his most profitable farm.”\*

Milman says of these same times, “Italy, either imperfectly cultivated or not at all by the indolent or ruined proprietors, not only could not furnish the imposts on which the pay of the soldiery depended, but not even a certain supply of the necessaries of life. The neighboring countries were now occupied by warlike nations ; the supplies of corn from Africa were cut off ; foreign commerce nearly destroyed ; they could not look for supplies beyond the limits of Italy, throughout which the agriculture had been long in a state of progressive but rapid depression.”

A little later came the wars for the recovery of the lost provinces of the Western Empire. Under the generals of the emperor Justinian—Belisarius and Narses—the former enters and resubjugates Northern

\* Gibbon, iii, pp. 517, 518.

Africa, Sicily, and a large portion of Italy ; Rome suffering, within a short space of time, two distressing sieges. To these must be added the war of Parthia, the Bulgarians, and the Lombards. Various others might be named, but these will sufficiently serve our purpose. It is easy to find in the history of these times material to cancel the symbolic descriptions of the fourth trumpet. One has only to open the page of history, along the line which we have indicated, to find the reflective image of symbolic prophecy fully shadowed forth.

The symbolism of the fourth trumpet points to great public perplexity and distress, and this became an inevitable result of the policy of nations and tribes. After the rule of Odoacer in Italy the public miseries are thus described: "The twenty years of the Gothic war had consummated the distress and depopulation of Italy. As early as the fourth campaign [in the war for the resubjugation of the Western provinces], under the discipline of Belisarius himself, fifty thousand laborers died of hunger in the narrow region of Picenum, and a strict interpretation of the evidence of Procopius would swell the loss of Italy above the total sum of her present inhabitants, perhaps fifteen or sixteen millions. A still greater number was consumed by famine in the southern provinces, without the Ionian Gulf. Acorns were used instead of bread. Procopius had seen a deserted orphan suckled by a goat. Seventeen passengers were lodged, murdered, and eaten by two women who were detected and slain by the eighteenth."\*

The wars between Romans and barbarians, and between one tribe and another of the latter, could be sustained only by heavy imposts, which impoverished the poor, often to the extent of starvation, and always to great scarcities and sufferings ; to which must be added

\* Gibbon.

often the merciless pillage of an unchecked soldiery. Besides this, men who filled the offices of agriculture and the arts were taken from their professions to supply the military, leaving their families without adequate supplies. But not the least was the cutting off the usual import of grain. Northern Africa, Egypt, and Sicily had been the granaries of Italy; but war destroyed ships, blockaded ports, and ruined commerce. Famine induced pestilence, and though brief intervals of relief were had, nations were rocked in unsettled confusion, "as if the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." Added to this, three "woes" are announced, to intensify the last judgments, to which no clew is given other than that they are to be distressing. Perhaps the great plague in the sixth century (A. D. 542-591), extending from Persia to France, may be cited to answer the first "woe." Gibbon says of it: "No facts have been preserved to sustain an account, or even a conjecture, of the numbers that perished in this extraordinary mortality. I only find that during three months five, and at length ten, thousand persons died each day at Constantinople; that many cities of the East were left vacant, and that in several districts of Italy the harvest and the vintage withered on the ground. The triple scourge of war, pestilence, and famine afflicted the subjects of Justinian, and his reign is disgraced by a visible decrease of the human species, which has never been repaired, in some of the fairest countries of the globe." \*

\* Gibbon, after a restrictive criticism as to the number who perished in the plague, says: "One hundred millions is a number not wholly inadmissible."

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE EPOCHS OF THE TRUMPETS.—CONTINUED.

The Fifth Trumpet Epoch—The Sixth Trumpet.

V. *The Fifth Trumpet* is recorded as follows: “And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose out of the bottomless pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts of the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man.

“And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of char-

ions of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon." Rev. ix, 1-11.

We must not attempt to explain all the items of this marvelous description. This would be more than either parabolic or symbolic laws of interpretation would require. A few salient features, determinative of the true idea and "just circumference" of the vision must suffice. The imposing feature of the metaphor is the locust and his natural history, and hence this has been called the "locust trumpet." The locusts move in vast multitudes, leaving utter destruction in their track, and thus represent fierce and barbaric peoples. They are here represented as coming out of a cloud which darkened the air. We know they do literally move in clouds from one to two miles wide and three to four miles long, and so thick that the sun could not shine through them; darker than a dense thunder-cloud. The fact that the locust is selected and placed in the foreground of the scene further indicates a people of low grade, not well organized, odious, and despised.

This people should also be ferocious. Of all insects the locust is the most ferocious and destructive. These were "like horses prepared unto battle" (verse 7), and "the sound of his wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle." Verse 9. Their origin is horrible. The barbarians of Northern Europe and Asia had become known in history, but here is a race dwelling in an obscure part of the globe, known only as wild marauders in their inaccessible deserts, suddenly bursting their innumerable hordes upon the

world. John thus states it: "I saw a star fall from heaven to the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth." Verses 1-3.

These "locusts" had "a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name is Apollyon," that is, "destroyer." Verse 11. This is peculiar. The locusts have no king or leader. Prov. xxx, 26. The title of this king shows that he was different from all other kings. No such title is given to any merely political sovereign. He is both religious in profession and a destroyer. He ruins men's souls. He is "the angel of the bottomless pit." Verse 11.

"Saracen," says Dr. Hale, "is from the Arabic *sarēc*, a *thief*, a *robber*."\* But philologists are not agreed as to the origin of the name. The religious commission of these ferocious myriads gave permit to "hurt" only those who "had not the seal of God in their foreheads." "To these it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months." Verse 5. The notation of time—"five months"—is to be taken symbolically, a day for a year; thus, five months of thirty days is equal to one hundred and fifty years.

In turning to history to find the real facts denoted by the exuberant imagery of the fifth trumpet period, we find no such people but the Saracens under Mahomet, or, as more properly called, Mohammed. That this was the people intended and described history bears unmistakable evidence, and is, therefore, commonly conceded. The figure of the "locusts" points that way. Arabia is the home of the locust. They are found in

\* Hale's *Analysis*, etc., vol. iii, p. 615.

every clime of the East and Africa, but Arabia is peculiarly the place of their birth and abode. When God would bring locusts upon Egypt by Moses, he did not bring them from the vast deserts of Lybia west, but from the deserts of Arabia east. He caused an "east wind to blow" for twenty-four hours, and when they had fulfilled their purpose a "west wind" carried them back again. Exod x, 10-19. The baleful testimony of the times is given in verse 6: "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."

The Saracens began their military career under Mohammed, A. D. 622, and after twelve years all Arabia was subdued to the power and religion of the false prophet. At this juncture of affairs Mohammed dies. To settle the question of his successor, and the line of succession, were new and all-engrossing subjects. It was a crisis. But a brief experience in counsel and in bloody feuds determined Abubeker as the caliph.\* He died after two years, and the foreign wars were promptly begun. The first foreign conquests were Syria, Damascus, Jerusalem, and afterward Persia, Egypt, Northern Africa, and Spain. "In the ten years of the administration of Omar [the second caliph, A. D. 634, the opening of the fifth trumpet] the Saracens reduced to his obedience thirty-six thousand cities or castles, destroyed four thousand Christian churches, or temples of the unbelievers, and edified fourteen hundred mosques for the exercise of the religion of Mohammed. One hundred years after the flight of Mohammed from Mecca [A. D. 708] the arms and reign of his successors extended from India to the Atlantic Ocean, over the various distant provinces which may be comprised

\* The caliphs were supreme in regal and sacerdotal affairs. They were the authoritative interpreters of the Koran.

under the names of Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Spain.”\*

Mohammed had but an indefinite idea of the extent of the empire he was to subjugate, but the Koran was a declaration of war against mankind. “The world, therefore, must prepare at once for a new barbaric invasion, and its great universal religious war.” The western empire of Rome had fallen by northern barbarians; the eastern seat of its dominion must now fall by southern, and if possible fiercer, tribes. It is not consistent to the plan and object of this work to give extended views or details of matters of simple history. We can only state salient facts, as way-marks by which the reader may be guided.

One event we may not omit. We have terminated the fifth trumpet epoch at A. D. 732. At this date the Saracens had taken Spain. They had now invaded Europe, to do there as they had done to Arabia, Persia, Syria, and the fertile regions of Egypt and Northern Africa. Passing the Pyrenees, the Saracens now enter France, and display their countless myriads near the city of Tours. Here they meet and are overcome by the Christian army, commanded by Charles Martel. The battle was terrible, but decisive. It saved Europe from the tyranny of Asiatic Mohammedanism.

The wars of Mohammed and his successors were professedly religious wars. They assumed the right, and the divine commission, to make war upon all nations who refuse to submit to the religion of the Koran. This religion was a compound of Judaism, Christianity, and paganism. Its fundamental profession is, “I believe in one God, and Mohammed is the apostle of God.” The commander of every army first offers liberty and protection to the enemy if they renounce

\* Gibbon, v, p. 175.

idolatry and adopt the Koran. If they have already a written creed, and believe in one God, and will pay tribute, they spare them; otherwise, war without mercy, with its inevitable accompaniment of pillage and plunder. The world has never seen the equal of Islam in fanatical cruelty, extent of conquest, strength of cohesion, and length of continuance, excepting only the case of the antichrist beast, or harlot, to be noticed in its place. Herein the imagery of the fifth trumpet is most amply realized.

VI. *The Sixth Trumpet* is thus given: “One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.” “And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and the men that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

“By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and

idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” Rev. ix, 12–21.

If we take the notation of time in the sixth trumpet epoch (verse 15) according to prophetic or symbolic reckoning, we make it three hundred and ninety-one years, which, added to the terminus of the fifth trumpet, would bring us down to A. D. 1123. This seems the most in harmony with all the facts in the case. The Turks had now fully asserted their dominion and superiority over the Saracenic power, and Islamism had triumphed over Christianity. The moral influence of the latter is scarcely better than that of the former. The political power of the Eastern Roman Empire is crippled on all sides, and is scarcely felt out of Constantinople, a few cities in Asia Minor, and a few European provinces in the north-west. It was Turkish power that captured and sacked Constantinople in A. D. 1453, and it is the same power that now rules the present Turkish Empire.

Like the preceding trumpet, this also is burdened with presages of war, of wrathful visitations, and direful and varied sufferings. As we have already stated, the “woes” which were pronounced against the fifth, sixth, and seventh trumpet periods, were premonitions of intensified judgments upon the nations, and to this effect the second “woe” is repeated. Verse 13. It is sufficient to say that the first and second woes occurred during the Saracenic and Turkish rule, which the nations found to be more ferocious and inhuman than the invasions and dominion of the northern barbarians who overthrew the Western Roman Empire. During the fifth and sixth trumpet periods the public calamities and private suffer-

ings are graphically given in verse 6: "And in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."

The language of the angel of the sixth trumpet in verse 13 betrays a clew to the location and time of his commission. John says: "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates." The number "four" in the "four angels that are bound" should be considered here, as elsewhere, as the number of fullness. Thus (chap. vii, 1) the "four corners of the earth" means the whole earth, and the "four winds of the earth" signify winds in every possible direction. The distress was in all places, among all classes of people, as if the frame-work of nature and of society were dissolved. The loosing of the four angels denotes that they had been restrained hitherto from executing judgment which they were now called to administer. Their being "bound in the great river Euphrates" is clearly an indication of the locality of the seat and center of the events of the epoch. Euphrates here is to be taken literally. The "great river Euphrates" is made, not a boundary line of nations, but the heart and center of an eastern dominion, and of political revolutions of indefinite eastern limitation. In a similar sense we still use the words "East," or "Orient," or "Oriental," so that if we would form a just idea of the sixth trumpet epoch we must look specially to the history of Asia, from its western boundary to the sunrising, or as far east as was known in history. It will be remembered, therefore, that the epochs of the "seven seals" and of the first four "trumpets," relate chiefly to the western

branch of the Roman Empire, embracing Europe and Northern Africa; but the fifth and sixth trumpets represent epochs and events not only within the eastern branch of the old Roman Empire, namely, from the western limit of Asia to the meridian of Euphrates, but from Euphrates to Hindostan and to the undefined limit of the East.

A strong corroboration of this view is further found in verse 16: "And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand, and I heard the number of them." It was characteristic of the ancients to estimate the strength of an army by the number of its cavalry, and this is specially true of the armies of the Turks. This savage race, which had emerged from the region beyond the Caspian Sea, and had fought with Saracens and other tribes, and even as an ally of the Roman army at Constantinople, had now, in the epoch of the sixth trumpet, become the ruling military power in Western Asia. Nearly a hundred and fifty years had now elapsed under the galling domination of the Saracens, and though they abated somewhat the stern conditions of toleration, still no adequate liberty of opinion cheered the hope of the future. The fanatical zeal which had animated the first Saracenic conquests now yielded to the voluptuous desire of enjoying the lands and varied treasures which had been gained by conquest and pillage. To carry the doctrines of Islam over the world and enforce them upon the nations--the objects that infuriated their zeal at the beginning--they now saw would require armies of vast extent in every province, and unremitting military activity. The caliphs had mostly retired from the battle-field and rolled in wealth and luxury beyond a precedent. The Saracens declined from their first fanatical zeal, and the Turks, by their own strength and

valor, and by alliance with inferior tribes, appeared foremost in the field.

The number of horsemen given in ver. 16 must be computed either literally or figuratively. If literally, it is equal to two hundred millions, a number which refutes itself. We therefore take the meaning to be figurative; that is, as expressive of a great and indefinite number, as in Psa. lxviii, 17. The Hebrews counted by *chiliads*, or thousands, and after this by *myriads*, or ten thousands. They could go no further by regular numerical progression. So in Rev. v, 11: "The number of them was myriads of myriads and chiliads of chiliads," or, as in the common version, "Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." The number in the passage before us (Rev. ix, 16) is without computation or definite knowledge, but marvelously great. When John says (chap. vii, 4), "I heard the number of them which were sealed," the number was explained as definite. But here he says, "I heard the number of them," and leaves it indefinite as to extent. But this does not at all invalidate the vision. As Bengel says, "When John adds that 'their number was heard by him,' he hints that the certain number specified, if it be put for an uncertain one, yet has not a wide uncertainty, and that the greatness of the number, however incredible it may appear, is still to be credited." \*

We turn now to the history of the sixth trumpet to find there a full expression and illustration of the military prominence of the times, and of the consequent sufferings, according to the second "woe" of the prophecy. We repeat, that the date of the sixth trumpet is, as we view it, about A. D. 732, and the territory embracing the events answers chiefly to the Eastern Ro-

\* Comment *in loc.*

man Empire, with the territory added from the river Tigris to the river Ganges. We can give only jottings of great events to indicate the current of the times. The points here and now to be considered relate to the questions whether the sufferings during the period of the sixth trumpet, and in the regions mentioned, really occurred, and whether the leading power of evil within the limits of the territory named is due to the Turkomans. It must be kept in mind that the northern Asiatic hordes, north and east of the Euxine and Caspian Seas, were pressing by millions westward and southward and eastward for lands to plunder. They were freebooters by profession, and mostly fought on horseback. By alliance with different tribes or with the different nations they could present a formidable force, especially of cavalry, in which they were marvelously skilled.

In the war of Nicephorus the Roman emperor (A. D. 781) and Harun-ul-Rashid (or Aaron the Just), the former entered upon the military roll one hundred and thirty-five thousand soldiers, and above three hundred thousand marched under the black flag of the barbarians. Forty thousand of the Romans fell in one battle.

As early as 558 the army of the Avars made its first appearance before the gates of Constantinople, to the surprise and alarm of the city and government. In an interview with the emperor Justinian he asked as to the meaning of this sudden mission. The chief of the barbarians replied: "You see before you, O mighty prince, the representatives of the strongest and most populous of nations, the invincible, the irresistible Avars. We are willing to devote ourselves to your service; we are able to vanquish and destroy all the enemies who now disturb your repose. But we expect,

as the price of our alliance, as the reward of our valor, precious gifts, annual subsidies, and fruitful possessions." We quote it as a true specimen of the total abnegation of the moral principle of justifiable war.

The Carmathians—followers of Carmath—made their appearance A. D. 890. They professed a more spiritual interpretation of the Koran than given by the caliphs. Their leader commanded a hundred and seven thousand fanatics, thirsting for blood and pillage. Twenty thousand pilgrims, on their way to Mecca, were at one time robbed and exposed to perish in the desert; and at another thirty thousand citizens and strangers were put to the sword at Mecca, and their holy city stripped of its sacred appendages and wealth. Their ferocious cruelty became the terror of the world; they infested Irak, Syria, Egypt, and the confines of Babylonia and Mesopotamia. At Bagdad he put to death the reigning caliph. Gibbon gives it as the second visible cause of the downfall of the empire of the caliphs.

In a war of Theophilus, the Roman emperor, and Motassem the caliph, and commander of the Turkish hordes, there arose an issue wholly personal between them, but which involved the destruction of the beautiful city Amorium. The city was besieged fifty-five days with desperate valor on both sides. The city was taken. "About seventy thousand Moslems had perished, and their loss had been revenged by the slaughter of thirty thousand Christians and an equal number of captives. To a point of honor Motassem had sacrificed a flourishing city, two hundred thousand lives, and the property of millions."\*

Mahmud, the Guznevide, a Turk, was a great prince and warrior. Twelve expeditions into Hindostan had made him famous. His armies are counted by multi-

\* Gibbon.

plied myriads. When the allied force of the various tribes which were in his service was estimated, two hundred thousand horse were counted in their cavalry. When the Turks invaded the provinces of the Eastern Roman Empire, A. D. 1050, "the myriads of Turkish horse overspread a frontier of six hundred miles." This one expedition cost the blood of one hundred and thirty thousand Christians. The army of Alp Arslan, the Turkish commander and sultan, numbered two hundred thousand, and his servants, it is said, twelve hundred princes or sons of princes, and the trophies of his victory were the plunder of the cities from Antioch to the Black Sea.\*

Mahmud (A. D. 980) had engaged the allied force of many tribes to strengthen his army, and had been warned of the danger incurred thereby. He therefore inquired of their chieftain what supply he could furnish for military service? He replied, "If you send one of these arrows into my camp, fifty thousand of your servants will mount on horseback." "And if that number," continued Mahmud, "should not be sufficient?" "Send this second arrow," said the chieftain, "to the horde of Balik, and you will find fifty thousand more." "But," said Mahmud, "if I should stand in need of the whole force of your kindred tribes?" "Dispatch my bow," was the last reply of Ismael, "and as it is circulated the summons will be obeyed by two hundred thousand horse." When Mahmud reviewed his troops, just before his death, he found his military force to amount to one hundred thousand foot, fifty-five thousand horse, and thirteen hundred elephants."†

We have now reached within twenty-three years of the terminus of the sixth trumpet epoch, according to dates and estimates given in the prophecy. Within

\* Gibbon.

† See Gibbon, vol. v, chap. 57.

that brief space—in A. D. 1101—occurred the first Crusade, of which there were seven in all. The reader must know that Jerusalem and its environs were considered as holy places, and not less by the Mohammedans than by Christians. To visit these holy places, and worship there, was accounted as of high spiritual merit, securing an assured title to final salvation. Multitudes, both of Christians and Islams, and from all parts of the world, flocked there. As the Christians could not obtain equal rights with the followers of the false prophet, persecution, often to martyrdom, resulted, until cries of distress echoed in all lands, and an appeal to arms became inevitable. The preparation for such an expedition must be vast, almost limitless. The result proved that it cost the countries and cities through which the invading army must pass, rivers of blood and unmeasured privations and sufferings. Hunger and thirst knew no law of restraint or compensation. The invading army was raised in Europe, and their march to the promised land was every-where marked with blood and devastation. “Of the first crusaders, three hundred thousand had already perished before a single city was rescued from the infidels, before their graver and more noble brethren had completed the preparations of their enterprise.”\*

The causes of war were various. They were, for the propagation of the Mohammedan faith; the succession of the caliphate, or the determination of the true line of succession of the empire of the caliphs (and of these there are five dynasties, and the sixth trumpet epoch enters late in the third); the recovery of cities and provinces which had been dismembered from the Roman Empire by the invasions of the Saracens and Turks; the wars for the resubjugation of these prov-

\* Gibbon.

inces and cities back to the Turkish dominion; expeditions ostensibly for the extension of the Mohammedan faith, but really for plunder. Of the local quarrels and feuds for which there was no redress we do not speak. Nor do we speak of the countries outside of the limits of the Eastern Roman Empire. The prophet goes no farther.

The support of immense armies, whether in peace or war, but especially the latter, involved the most oppressive imposts. Not only were the soldiers paid a given price for their service, but they were encouraged and inflamed with the expectation of indefinite pillage at every conquered city, or, if killed in battle, to go quick to paradise. The lands were imperfectly tilled, while the flower of the population was drafted into the army, and the two concomitants of war, famine and pestilence, often spread the pall of death upon the devastated lands.

The student in history will not consider the picture overdrawn. We could give only suggestive indications, representative statements, leaving the reader to fill, *ad libitum*, the fearful breadth of the subject. We shall, therefore, regard the calamities of the sixth trumpet, with its emphatic "woe" added, to be fully met by the facts of history, in the time and locality assigned them.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE PERIOD OF ANTICHRIST.

The date of Antichrist—Important Evidence of Chapter X—How Antichrist Identified—By Prophecy—By his Persecution of the Saints—By Temporal Autocracy—Is a Roman Power—Three Stages in the Development of Antichrist—What the Argument Claims to have Proven under this Head.

AT the risk of seeming to diverge from the true line of argument we shall here submit a statement of the character and period of the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist. This is due to any faithful exposition of the “last things,” and is here due according to the chronological scheme we have adopted.

## THE TWELVE HUNDRED AND SIXTY YEARS OF ANTICHRIST.

The chronology of the Apocalypse is the vexed question of unfulfilled prophecy. The chief difficulty of explaining and applying prophetic symbols would be removed if we could identify their archetypes in the facts of history, and this again would be more easily accomplished if we could settle the dates and periods of the Apocalypse in their true order. An important step is gained by settling the true scope and scheme of the book itself. Indeed, till this be done we may say of the writer, “he walks on in darkness.” We have not space here even to enumerate the various theories, but must content ourselves by simply stating our own; which is, that the design of the Book of Revelation is to sketch an outline of the history of the Church from the time of John down to the final judgment-day—giving her

struggles, her sufferings, her triumphs, her final success and glorious reward, together with the bloody type and the everlasting doom of her enemies.

As one object of prophecy is “to forewarn and fore-arm the Church,” it has ever been the method of divine wisdom to keep before the eye of faith, and “the mind that hath wisdom,” some intimations of the providential future relating to the holy seed, including with greater or less clearness a description, not only of the more important facts which should transpire, but some hints, also, as to time. Thus the residence of the Hebrews in Egypt, the bondage in Babylon, the first advent of Christ, the destruction of Jerusalem, with numerous other events of lesser moment are examples of this kind. Inquiry, therefore, into the providential future of the Church is both relevant and important when reverently and discreetly made by the light of prophecy and the facts of history. As to time, different methods of notation are adopted in Scripture. The simplest is to put down the period in solar years. But, except in a few instances, chiefly the “four hundred years” residence in Egypt (Gen. xv, 13), and their “seventy years’” captivity in Babylon (Jer. xxv, 11, 12), there is scarcely a mention made of solar time for the measurement of prophetic cycles. Another mode, of greater frequency, is by symbolic time, or where a lesser period is put for a greater, as a day for a year, a week for seven years, a month for thirty years, or a year of three hundred and sixty days for three hundred and sixty years. Thus, the “seventy weeks” of Daniel (chap. ix, 24) are 70 weeks symbolic time, equaling 490 years. The “forty-two months” of John (Rev. xi, 2) are 42 times 30, equaling 1260 years—always reckoning in symbolic time a day for a year and thirty days to a month. So, also, the “time, and times, and half a time,” or “time,

times, and the dividing of time" (Rev. xii, 14; Dan. vii, 25) are a year, two years, and a half year, which, reckoning three hundred and sixty days to a year and counting each day as the symbol of a year, as in Ezek. iv, 6, make twelve hundred and sixty years. The "thousand two hundred and threescore days" (Rev. xi, 3), are, in like manner, twelve hundred and sixty years.

Two other methods are resorted to, and are by far the more common and simple, whereby to give a clue to the question of events; namely, *the order* of events and the *nature and descriptive circumstances* of events. These are brought out with great prominence in the Apocalypse; the former only giving a general idea of time prior to the event, but both being of indispensable value in connection with other methods. For instance, where events occur serially, it is obvious that if the first, or any one link of the series, can be identified in history it is easy to trace the connection progressively or regressively, as the case may be; particularly if, midway of this chain, an important chronological link becomes indisputably recognizable, a large gain is made toward the unfolding of the subsequent periods. Now, such a recognizable feature is found in the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist. We are guided in our searchings after this important date by the frequent notations of symbolic phrase, by the general law of serial order, and by the light of descriptive circumstances. The reader will perceive these coincidences unfolded in the progress and development of our argument. To fix the date of this antichristian period has been a focal point, to which criticism and investigation have been directed with no common zeal and diligence. If this can be done, the present status of the Church can be clearly defined and its more immediate future forestalled.

The period of the reign of antichrist, including an

account of his downfall, has received greater formality and fullness of description and a bolder outline of chronological limitation than any period of the apocalyptic visions, filling one third the entire Book of Revelation. The struggles of the Church with pagan Rome, with the northern barbarians who disrupted the Western Empire, together with the overflowing scourge of the Mohammedans, embracing the periods of the entire six seals and six of the trumpet periods under the seventh seal, were dismissed in less than half the space in the four preceding chapters.

The tenth chapter of Revelation marks an interval in the prophecy and must be regarded as a formal prelude to the grand and terrific which was to follow. It was the moment of a solemn announcement. The most terrible enemy the Church would ever be called to grapple with, or had ever grappled with, now presented himself. When Daniel had beheld him in the remote distance “he was grieved in his spirit, the visions of his head troubled him,” and “his countenance was changed.” Dan. vii, 15, 28. The period was to be long, and the conflicts of the Church mighty; and now, lest it should be inferred that because the seventh seal had been opened, and six of the trumpet periods under that seal already passed, the end of the Church’s warfare had come, and the time of her sufferings was over, a mighty angel descended from heaven, and with one foot upon the sea and the other upon the earth, and with his hand lifted toward heaven, in form of taking a solemn oath, “sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, *διπλονος ουκ εστι επι*, that the time shall not be yet, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall sound,\* the mystery of God should be finished”—

\* This is certainly the true rendering. It is well known that *μελλω* is often used to express simple futurity, as in Matt. xi, 14; Luke

the mystery of his providence which allowed so great sufferings to fall upon his Church. Immediately after the delivery of this prologue, contained in the tenth chapter, follow various independent representations of this antichristian power: its nature, its enormous expansion, its malignant persecutions of the faithful, its corruptions and blasphemy, and its everlasting overthrow. From the beginning of the tenth chapter to the eleventh verse of the nineteenth chapter the descriptions are entirely engrossed with the history and doom of antichrist and the events connected therewith. After the downfall of antichrist the thread of the prophetic narrative is resumed only at chapter xix, 11.

As the principal object here is to determine the date of this antichristian period as nearly as may be by solar measurement, we hasten to this point. In seven different places, by the varied computation of "days," "months," and "times," the years of the reign of antichrist are put down by Daniel and John at just twelve hundred and sixty years. Dan. vii, 25, and xii, 7; Rev. xi, 2, 3, and xii, 6, and xiii, 5. Is there no moral significance in this fact? Is the question of *time* a matter of simple curiosity? Was it intended to baffle human research and inquiry? We humbly think not. If, then, antichrist is to reign twelve hundred and sixty solar years, and is then, according to the explicit statements of prophecy seven times recorded, to fall to rise no more, it is apparent that to fix the date of this period, to determine where in the Christian era it begins, is to supply

ix, 31, *et al.* The angel evidently intended only to declare the time to be yet future when "the mystery of God should be finished;" but that it should be certainly finished "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel." The sequel shows that it was late in the seventh trumpet period when the "mystery of God" was finished, in the downfall of Babylon, which forever ended the Church's persecutions and sufferings.

new matter of courage and consolation, of hope and faithfulness to an afflicted Church.

Where, then, do the twelve hundred and sixty years begin? This attained, and it is easily determined where shall be the end. The question can be answered only by a careful attention to descriptive circumstances involving the character, form, and proportions of antichrist. We arrive at the solution by a sort of inductive process. For instance, when all the characteristics of the antichrist of the Apocalypse as laid down in prophecy are brought together and submitted, then the historic power, or agency, or organization which is found to embody in itself all these, and to fall within the historic order and relation of time and sequence indicated, must be assumed to be the real and historic prototype and impersonation of these prophetic symbols and delineations. In no other way could the question be solved, from the nature of the case. But it must be remembered that mathematical accuracy in solar days and years we do not assume to teach. The details of the argument do not fall within our plan, but we must generalize our statements under two heads; namely, the *moral character* of antichrist, and his *external form*. It is only by the outgrowth, or external and organic form, that we are able to trace and fix the true *chronos* of his existence.

1. The antichrist of prophecy, especially of the Apocalypse and Daniel, is an apostate Christian Church. His profession is Christian; his doctrine and practice antichristian. Paul says, “The day of the Lord shall not come, except there come (*ἡ αποστασία*) THE APOSTASY first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is

God." 2 Thess. ii, 3, 4. Here is a character denominated "the son of perdition," yet "sitting in the temple of God," and assuming, with blasphemous hypocrisy, the prerogatives of God. His whole character is given in this connection by the apostle. The same character is mentioned Rev. xiii, 11, as a "Beast," of kingly authority, "who had two horns like a lamb, but he spake like a dragon." In Rev. xvii, 1, 5, John describes the same power under the image of a "HARLOT . . . THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS"—the standing symbol of an apostate, idolatrous Church. Rev. xvii. See Ezek. xvi and xxviii. The merchandise of mystic Babylon was in the (*σωματῶν καὶ ψυχας ανθροπῶν*) "bodies and souls of men." Rev. xviii, 13. She trafficked in the temporal and eternal interests of mankind.

2. Antichrist was to be the great persecutor of the saints, the terror of the Church. "He shall wear out the saints of the Most High," says Daniel, and shall "make war with the saints and prevail against them," "and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people." Dan. vii, 21, 25, and viii, 24. John saw the "HARLOT" "drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," and in "Babylon" "was found the blood of prophets and of saints." Rev. xvii, 6, and xviii, 24. John abounds in descriptions of anti-christ as a persecuting power.

3. Antichrist is a temporal and spiritual autocracy. Daniel says, "He shall think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until time, times, and the dividing of time" (twelve hundred and sixty years), Dan. vii, 25—a phrase which exactly denotes the absolute prerogative of God as the supreme Ruler of human affairs, as the same prophet himself teaches (chap. ii, 21, "And he [God] changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings.")

Paul says that he, the man of sin, antichrist, “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” 2 Thess. ii, 4. Antichrist, as the word imports, is that organized power which openly and directly antagonizes God. The issue between them is as to which shall have the sovereign government of this world ; or, in other language, which shall rule and dominate the faith and conscience and moral liberty of mankind. The issue is stated Matt. iv, 9, 10. The assumption of supremacy over human affairs, both in temporal and spiritual things, rightfully belongs to God.

4. Antichrist is a Roman power of a new and peculiar type, not of civic Rome, but a power Roman in its character. This will be considered soon.

5. Antichrist is a Roman power of the later period, to arise after the extinction of the Roman Empire in the West. This also will soon be considered.

6. Antichrist is a political sovereignty. Daniel represents it under the symbol of a “*horn*,” the standing symbol of a kingdom : “I considered the horns, and behold there came up among them another *little horn*, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots : and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. . . . I beheld them, because of the voice of the great words which the [little] horn spake. . . . And another [the little horn] shall rise after them ; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings, and he shall speak great words against the Most High,” etc. Dan. vii, 8, 11, 24, 25. John also speaks of antichrist as “the beast that was, and is not, and yet is . . . and the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” Rev. xvii,

8, 11. Both "*beast*" and "*horn*" are symbols of kingdom. It is not necessary to this part of the argument to amplify proof of these points. It will not be disputed that the character denominated the antichrist of Daniel and of John does combine the traits given.

Now, the point of the argument lies here: at whatever period the Church is found to have taken on these several characteristics, at that period we are to look for the date of antichrist. It is a simple search into the history of the Church for the embodied, historic prototype of the symbolic descriptions of prophecy.

It should be further considered, however, that some of the characteristics of antichrist are moral and religious and some are political. In the former the evidence as to the exact solar date is not easily fixed. It is like determining the day or year when a word becomes obsolete. It was once in vogue; it is now obsolete and dropped from the vocabulary. Somewhere within the two hundred years past it began to fall into disuse; at length it was marked *rare*, and at last *obsolete*, but the day or year of the change no lexicographer can tell. But he does know that it was once in use, but is now in disuse. It is thus in determining the exact date of the apostasy of the Church, so far as relates to simply moral causes. It began, as a seedling, in Paul's day. He saw, with his eye on this subject, the tendencies to anti-christianism, and was endued with prophetic foresight to predict the distant result: "The mystery of iniquity doth already work," he says, "that he may be revealed in his time." 2 Thess. ii, 6, 7. Seven hundred years later the gigantic proportions of the man of sin we find fully developed.

As antichrist is a political sovereign, as well as a moral and religious apostate, it will be seen that we are hereby furnished with a historic test by facts and dates

by which we can certainly identify his person and determine the date of his appearing. This will be fully stated in its time. At present we aim to indicate the nature and limit of our inquiry.

1. The order of our inquiry leads us to determine the period of the apostasy of the Church. We do not ask, At what age did the Church depart from the simplicity of the apostles? But at what period did she become so corrupt as to answer the descriptions of prophecy relating to antichrist—the “man of sin,” “the great harlot,” mystic “Babylon,” the “little horn,” the “eighth head of the beast,” (Rev. xvii, 11) the remorseless persecutor of the saints? The three gradational stages mark the downward progress of the Church to her great apostasy. These we shall denominate the *hierarchal period, the State Church period, and the period of the revolt of the popes from the dominion of the Eastern emperors.*

During the first three centuries the Church had grown up a separate establishment from the State, and had, from various causes, developed the idea and form of a spiritual or ecclesiastical hierarchy, culminating in the bishop of Rome. The doctrine of the absolute unity of the Church, holding guardianship of the spiritual efficacy of all the sacraments and of all channels of grace, made the doctrine of a spiritual autoocracy or headship necessary, and the bishop of Rome was designated as that head. The maxim, as old as Cyprian, “*extra ecclesium nulla salus*,” was a most natural conclusion. Here, then, the foundation of a spiritual despotism was laid. The outlines of the character of “the man of sin,” sitting “in the temple of God and showing himself that he is God,” were formed. It took form in the blasphemous exaltation of the spiritual office. By the spiritual power vested in the clergy it placed them between

Christ and the devout soul, merging first the Church into the hierarchy, and then the hierarchy into the papacy, assuming the absolute vicegerency of Christ upon the earth, and dooming with anathema all schism, dissent, or protest from this standard.

Such was the form and fashion which the Church began to take on prior to the fourth century. Innocent I., in the beginning of the fifth century, and Leo the Great, forty years later, consolidated the foundations of this new monarchy, and Gregory the Great, at the close of the sixth century, carried forward the structure to completion in all essential features. The spiritual hierarchy thus erected was the first grand step in the apostasy.

2. Another step was taken in the fourth and subsequent centuries by erecting this hierarchical establishment into a State Church. Under the Christian emperors, from the time of Constantine the Great, A. D. 313, the Church became a branch of the civil polity. Hitherto the Church had grown up a separate establishment, and as it operated from the force and genius of the Christian life and doctrine, it antagonized directly, not only with paganism as a religious institution, but with the genius of the Roman polity as an offspring of pagan intellect, ambition, and superstition. It had gained mightily during the previous two hundred years, or since the death of the apostle John. The first scene in the apocalyptic drama, upon opening the "first seal," was that of the mighty spread of the Gospel. It became obvious, therefore, that either the empire must overcome Christianity, or Christianity would revolutionize the empire, or they must unite upon some middle ground of compromise. This last device was adopted by Constantine, and Christianity arose a State Church.

But by exalting the Church in her wealth and exter-

nal power and privilege, through this union, she became, in an inverse proportion, spiritually debased and corrupted, and the unholy alliance became the second grand step downward in her great apostasy. As the spiritual hierarchy had been developed and advocated by Cyprian, so the State Church theory became the *beau ideal* of church perfection with Augustine; and the idea and model which her writers and learned men supplied her secularized clergy reduced to form, and hardened into law, and enforced as dogma, as fast as the progress of things would allow.

3. During the period of this State Church existence, however, the bishop of Rome and the whole Church were overshadowed by the authority of the Romano-Byzantine emperors, and never reached, and in the nature of the case never could reach, the full height and proportions of that antichristian prototype which filled the eye and gave birth to the symbolism of prophecy. While Rome remained subject to the Eastern emperors their ecclesiastical as well as temporal supremacy was never openly opposed by the popes and clergy. Justinian, in his revision of Roman law, legislates equally for the Church and State, and settles every thing by imperial authority, "from the creed on the Trinity to the number of blows of the scourge to be inflicted or pious ejaculations to be uttered for each offense under the penitential code."\* It is true that Gregory II., writing to the emperor Léo, pleads that princes should not intermeddle with the affairs of the Church; but this was only in abatement of the alarming and unprecedented reach of power assumed by that most incorrigible iconoclast, and was also the date of the final revolt of the popes from the tyranny of the emperors. The emperors were always a check upon the popes, and

\* Milman.

restrained and baffled their ambition, and often humbled them, as well by their own as by the petty tyranny of the exarchs.

It was only after the popes had shaken off their connection with and dependence on the emperors, and became a separate and independent power, the assumed representatives and defenders of the Italian cause, standing unawed and isolated in their gigantic usurpations, that the Church rapidly reached the full dimensions of her predicted apostasy. This was about the middle of the eighth century. Pope Gregory II. came in collision with and openly revolted from the dominion of the emperors, and their power practically died in the West with the emperor Leo, A. D. 741. "With Pope Gregory III," says Milman, with his eye on this very point, "we enter upon a new epoch of Latin Christianity." These facts are of fundamental importance in fixing the date of antichrist, as the reader will soon see.

Here, then, are three stages in the historic development of antichrist as an apostate Church—which we have denominated the hierarchal period, the State Church period, and the epoch of the revolt of the popes from the dominion of the Eastern emperors and their assumption of control of the powers of human governments.

This last epoch alone was marked by that well-defined trait of antichrist, already mentioned, when he "should think to change times and laws;" an assumption of the absolute prerogative of God. This was the crowning act of church apostasy, and nothing is better attested in history than that the popes did not assume it until the period of their revolt from the dominion of the emperors, and that they did assume it then.

The moral status of the Church was now clearly

antichristian, and its relative attitude toward the civil powers of the world brings it forth in distinct individuality. Its character and its acts are no longer complicated with State supremacy, but are strictly its own. The doctrine of one Catholic Church—the repository of all ecclesiastical power, and with all spiritual power for temporal absolution, and the channel for all sacramental grace for eternal salvation—had become a dogma. The primacy of St. Peter and the lineal descent of the popes from him had been an accredited tenet from the beginning of the fifth century—about two hundred years. The doctrine of a theocratic Church had drawn after it the inference that all seeming variations of opinion, being opposed to the unity of the Church, should be prohibited under anathema and suppressed by authority. The prohibition of the use and reading of such books as were supposed to contain heretical or injurious doctrine had been enforced under anathema since the fifth century. Image worship, which had become only a compromise with heathenism and a substitute for idol worship, had become so thoroughly rooted, and so universally popular, that not even the whole civil authority of the Roman government, under two successive emperors, enforced by a sanguinary civil war, could displace or even check it in the West. The Teutonic and other barbarian conquerors of the West could easily transfer their adoration of the old divinities to the Virgin Mary and the saints. The penitential system had practically supplanted the evangelical doctrines of repentance and faith, and placed in the hands of the clergy the temporal punishment of sin. Monasticism, celibacy of the clergy, priestly absolution, auricular confession, the superstitious veneration of the sacraments, the denial of the holy Scriptures (particularly any translation but the Latin Vulgate) to the common people, the right of

the Church to enforce uniformity of faith by civil and corporal penalties, the authority of tradition in determining the sense of Scripture and the rights of the Church; these and other features of the "man of sin" had developed to full antichristian proportions. Indeed, the student in Church history will not dispute the antichristian character of the Church at this time, but will object, rather, that we have not placed it earlier. To this, however, we repeat the answer, that the archetypal idea of prophecy concerning the Church's apostasy could not be historically developed and realized while the Church remained as a subordinate power of the Roman polity. And again, some features of the apostasy matured earlier than others. Her assuming to "change times and laws" could never, from the nature of the case, co-exist with her subordination to civil powers. The bond between the Roman Church and the imperial Roman State must be severed. The State Church period of her history must be terminated; and she, thus individualized, standing isolated and apart, must be contemplated as acting out the genius of her own character unawed and unrestrained. The force of the argument under this head is to date the Church's apostasy, in her full antichristian proportions, at the middle of the eighth century, near to A. D. 756.

4. We are to consider the antichrist of prophecy was to be a Roman power. We mean not simply that it was to grow up within the limits of the old Roman Empire or that it was to have its seat in the ancient city of Rome—both which are true; much less that it was the civic empire restored; but that it was to be Roman in its character—the reproduction, in a form altogether new and peculiar, of the essential features and traits of the old Roman dominion. Daniel saw this power as

“a little horn” rising out of the head of the “beast.” Dan. vii, 7, 8; Rev. xvii, 11. The government of the emperors would pass away, but antichrist, like a phe-nix, would rise from its ashes. Imperial Rome would perish, but, like the chrysalis, it was to inclose the ele-ments of a new organization, which, after being warmed by the milder influences of Christianity, would be par-tially transformed and evolved into life. If it could be said of John the Baptist, coming in “the spirit and power of Elijah,” that he “*was* Elijah,” by the same law of language, and a slighter metonymy, could the antichrist of Daniel and the Apocalypse be called Ro-man. The civil empire of Rome was demolished in the West by the barbarous nations of Northern Eu-rope, in the East by the Saracens and Turks; but in the West the Roman *character* long survived, as in the East the Greek and Asiatic traits still remained. The civil subjugation or even the Christianization of a people does not annihilate the idiosyncrasies of na-tional character, though it would give them a new direction.

Three principal traits distinguish the Roman type of character: law, submission, dominion. The Roman mind was not speculative or inquisitive like the Greek, but legislative and practical. Philosophy was not in-digenous to Italy, but was always cultivated there as an exotic. But history and jurisprudence suited their genius; and of the latter it may be said, in the language of Frederic Schlegel, “it is the only original intellectual possession of great value to which the Romans can lay undisputed claim.” In jurisprudence was represented the true bent and greatness of the Roman mind. The conquests of their victorious legions supplied new mate-rials for the deliberations of the Senate, and the applica-tion of that juridical polity which enwrapped in its iron

folds the world, as known to the ancients west of the Euphrates. The dominion of the world was the dream of the emperor, and the inborn conceit and passion of the subject. Age after age had left its distinct impression of nationality, and generation after generation had inherited the spirit of that "compact unity, that lofty pride, that grasping dominion, that sublime patriotism," which had at last erected the colossal proportions of a despotism such as the world had never seen. Daniel calls it "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly" (Dan. vii, 7), and all allusions to it in the Apocalypse are of the same character. We speak here of pagan Rome.

What form of Christianity could be expected to rise among such a people, after the spiritual life had declined and the Church was thrown back upon its forms? After the civil empire had become extinct, and the spiritual life of the Church had declined into the mere chivalry of nominal proselytism, the genius of the people would naturally erect a spiritual absolutism in the Church by the laws of moral affinity and the force of national tendencies; and it was thus the Roman hierarchy became a most philosophic result. It was simply the outgrowth of the mental habits and sentiments of the people, when the higher life of Christianity ceased to become the law of action, when the frame-work of civil government was demolished by the barbarians, leaving the Church as the ruling force and hope of society. The fall of Rome left the pope the most influential man in Europe, and Church doctrine and discipline the strongest bond of society.

At an early period of Christianity the decline of spiritual life gave prominence to national and provincial tendencies in the Church. The Greek mind, ever given to speculation, its philosophy "insatiably inquisitive,"

its devotees "spending their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing," early betrayed the Church into disputation upon profitless and impracticable abstractions. For centuries almost all the controversies which agitated the Church arose from those portions of the world pervaded by the Greek mind and genius. Less anxious for the exterior form of the Church than for the metaphysical basis and the etiological history of her doctrines, the Greek mind became prolific of questions which engendered factions, disturbed the general quiet, and quenched the living flame of piety. The tendency of the Western, or Latin, portion of the Church was exactly the reverse. The Roman mind, averse to philosophy, accustomed to submission, and satisfied with the plain, authoritative statements of truth, rested in the more quiet element of unquestioning faith; and, impelled by its own genius to the outwardness and juridical character of religion, devoted itself to the consolidation of the Christian body under one compact, digested code of discipline, administered by a hierarchy of which the bishop of Rome was the culminating head. The tendency of the Roman mind, says Milman, was to "harden into inflexible statute that which before had been left to usage, opinion, and feeling. The East enacted creeds, the West discipline." It is easy to perceive, also, how, in such a condition of things, the habit of appealing controversies to the umpirage of the bishop of Rome should have grown up almost insensibly among the churches. In the fourth century (A. D. 347) the right of appeal to the bishop of Rome was established by the orthodox council of Laodicea, and sanctioned in A. D. 379 by the emperors Gratian and Valentinian, and in A. D. 421 the same was further confirmed by imperial authority by Valentinian III.

How could it be otherwise than that power should concentrate at Rome? The “eternal city” had been for centuries the political and commercial center of the world. Trade, travel, politics, art, news, fashion—all had a central relation to Rome. The removal of the seat of empire (about A. D. 330) from Rome to Constantinople, though it greatly depopulated Italy and weakened the civil power of the West, could not deprive Rome of all her ancient greatness, and became an occasion of increasing the power of the papacy. By thus removing at such a distance the presence of the emperor, it left the bishop, as we have said, the most influential person in Europe, and for four centuries the events of the Church and of the empire tended to confirm and exalt the primacy of the see of St. Peter, with a constant, though generally insensible, advance of power in political affairs.

The Latin language, the natural bond of the Roman family, continued long to preserve both the unity and pre-eminence of the Roman character. It was the language of the Vulgate Scriptures, of the liturgy, of the literature and learning of the Romans; and after the irruptions of the barbarous nations, when a babel of tongues threatened to deluge Europe, the Latin became more than ever not only a bond of Roman unity, but an instrument of priestly craft and ascendancy. For a long time Romans only were intrusted with episcopal dignity. It was late in the sixth century (A. D. 566) before any but a Roman by birth appeared among the lists of the Frankish bishops. Popes Leo and Gregory the Great, both Romans by birth, and proudly inheriting the spirit of their ancestry, were scarcely less ambitious for the grandeur and perpetuity of Rome than for the defense and extension of the Christian faith. They were good representatives of the prevalent genius of

the papacy. They both marked epochs in the papacy and in the history of Christianity, and both developed the Roman type of mind in a new phase. "With Leo," says Milman, "Paul and Peter were the Romulus and Remus of Christian Rome," and with Gregory church extension was but a new form of Roman conquest.

Such was the spirit of the papacy and of the hierarchy. All missionary conquest abroad was consolidated under the absolute rule of the Roman see, not by the voluntary choice of the nominally converted nations, but by virtue of the divine right of the successors of St. Peter to universal dominion. Heresy, hence, became treason, and insubordination was punished as a crime. The penitential system was not less rigid than the Roman military discipline, and its penalties far more terrible to superstition than fines, scourges, imprisonment, or even death. The whole papal theory of church government and spiritual authority is but the reproduction, in a new form, of the Roman idea of dominion. Popery could have arisen to complete success nowhere but in Rome; and the Church, having once lost its divine life, could take on no other form but popery in Rome and among native Romans.

So far as these suggestions have any bearing upon the question of the date of antichrist, it may be observed that though the argument naturally connects itself with the paragraph which follows, without which it is incomplete, yet it is obvious that, as a Roman power, antichrist could not arise until Christianity had first conquered pagan Rome; nor until afterward, when the Church, having lost its spiritual life and apostolic simplicity, had become, in its turn, interpenetrated by the reactive force of the Roman genius and character; nor until, finally, the convulsions of Europe had opened the arena for the ambitious aspirations of the papacy

which would bring us down to the middle of the eighth century. This will appear more definite in the following paragraph.

5. But antichrist is not only a Roman power, but a Roman power of the later prophetic period—the last development of the old Roman dominion, which was to rise after the final extinction of the civil powers of the Roman emperors in Italy. The argument under this head is more conclusive as to date, because relating more exclusively to political events. We shall give only a summary of the argument.

In Rev. xvii the angel calls the attention of John to the doom of antichrist: "I will show unto thee," he says, "the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." She is represented as sitting upon a "scarlet colored beast," which had "seven heads and ten horns"—the standing symbol of the Roman power. That this "beast" represents a Roman power is obvious from the context, from the symbolism of both Daniel and John, and is so generally admitted by Protestant writers that we shall consider it as conceded without discussion. The present argument relates to the "seven heads," their order and continuance, and the succession of the "eighth head," mentioned in verse 11. These heads are thus explained by the angel interpreter. Vers. 9 and 10. "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings [or, *they are seven kings*, New Version]: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space." If, in this wonderful statement, we take the word "mountains" here literally, it would be most natural to understand it of the "seven hills" on which the city of Rome stood. But it seems more in accordance with the style of the prophet to understand it symbolically

to denote *forms of sovereignty*, as in Isa. ii, 2, and xi, 9; Jer. li, 25; Dan. ii, 35; Zech. iv, 7. Thus the “seven heads” and the “seven mountains” are explained in verse 10 to be seven kings, which, in prophetic idiom, are seven forms of government. This exactly corresponds to historic truth. Tacitus, the Roman annalist and historian, writing about the same time that John wrote the Apocalypse, in his enumeration of the different forms of Roman government says: “Rome has been governed by kings, by consuls, by dictators, by decemvirs, and by military tribunes with consular authority.”\* The triumvirates rather marked periods of disturbance, and were temporary and transitional. Tacitus mentions five, not including the imperial, which existed at the time of writing. John says “five are fallen, and one is, [the imperial] and the other is not yet come.” The coincidence is complete. There was but one other form of Roman civil government in Italy after the imperial, and that was the lieutenancy, or ex-archate, which, says John, “is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.” It existed in Italy from A. D. 554 to A. D. 752. The Roman power was commonly symbolized by a beast with seven heads. Rev. xii, 3; xiii, 1.

Now, our argument lies here. It was after these seven forms of Roman government should have passed away that the “eighth” form should arise. It is to this eighth form that the attention is specially called by the angel nuncio. It is this eighth power that is to be the great persecuting power, the terror of the world, the reproduction of the entire beast, antichrist: “And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” Ver. 11. In verse 8 it is called “the beast that was, and is not, and

\* Tacitus, *Annals*, lib. i, cap. 1.

yet is;" that is, the beast that existed, then ceased to exist, and then re-appeared. The Roman government existed under its "seventh head" (the ex-archate) one hundred and ninety-eight years, till A. D. 752. It then ceased to exist. It soon afterward re-appeared under its eighth head, the papacy in its full antichristian proportions. The dominion of this eighth head was indeed peculiar, a form *sui generis*, but so universal, so absolute, so intensely Roman—*ἐκ τῶι ἐπτά ἐστι*—it was *out of the seven*—both in the persons that swayed it and its genius and character, that it might well be said the entire beast re-appeared in this head. It was the last development of the Roman type of sovereignty.

We claim, then, that this description of the prophet proves that antichrist was to be the last development of Roman power, and that it was to appear after the civil government of the emperors had become extinct in Italy and the West, after the last form of the old civil dominion had passed away; that is, as history settles the date, after A. D. 752.

6. A further argument on the date of antichrist, corroborative of the foregoing, is found in Dan. vii, 8; xx, 24. After mentioning the "ten horns" of the beast as representing ten kingdoms which were to arise out of the ruins of the Roman Empire, the prophet speaks of another "little horn" that arose "before whom there were *three* of the first horns plucked up by the roots;" or, as it is elsewhere stated, "before whom *three* fell;" and again, "he [the little horn] shall subdue *three kings*." Here, then, it is specifically stated, in three different places, that three of the ten horns, or kingdoms, shall fall before, or be plucked up by, the little horn. Now, that this "little horn" is a representative of the identical antichristian power of which John speaks under the symbols the "harlot," "the beast," "Babylon," the

“eighth head” of the beast, etc., and that the fall of the three kingdoms was a necessary preliminary to its full power and triumph, are too obvious to admit of dispute.

The point, then, which concerns our present argument is, at what time did three of the ten kingdoms fall before the little horn, or the papacy? In determining this point it is obvious we must first go back a step and identify the ten kingdoms. In this we shall follow Dr. William Hales, the great chronologer, who, after Machiavel and Bishop Lloyd, gives the following list The Huns, in Hungary; the Ostrogoths, in Mœsia and Italy; the Visigoths, in Panonia [and Spain]; the Vandals, in Africa; the Suevi and Alans, in Spain; the Burgundians, in Burgundy; the Heruli, in Italy; the Saxons, in Britain and the Lombards, in Lombardy. As this list is from Machiavel, himself a papist, and has received the sanction of the celebrated chronologers, Bishop Lloyd and Dr. Hales, with other great names we need not mention, we shall assume it without discussion. We regard it as the only defensible hypothesis, substantially, which has been offered.

Another point it is needful to premise which is of still more importance to our argument. As the three horns that were plucked up seemed evidently, from all the descriptions, to have been directly and fatally in the way of the “little horn,” or papacy, as obstacles to its ambition, so that their extinction became a necessary contingent to the success of its schemes, we seem directed to Italy as the seat of their empire and the scene of their catastrophe. Nowhere else could they fatally obstruct the schemes of the papacy. The question, therefore, simplifies itself into the following: At what time did three of the ten kingdoms, having their seat in Italy, fall? Wonderful are the coincidences of

history. Just three—no more, no less—of these barbarian kingdoms had their seat in Italy, and fell. The Heruli, under their king and leader, Odoacer, enter Italy, and by their conquest of the city of Rome terminate the Western Roman Empire, A. D. 476. The Ostrogoths, under their king, Theodoric, conquer the Heruli, subvert their kingdom, and establish the Gothic sovereignty, A. D. 493. Their kingdom continues till A. D. 554, when it is in turn subverted by Narses, and Rome once more becomes subject to the Eastern emperors. In A. D. 726 Rome revolts from the Greek emperors, and in A. D. 752 the ex-archate, and with it the Roman civil power, is forever extinguished in Italy by the Lombards, whose rising fortunes now overshadow Rome and eclipse the ambition of the papacy. The severest struggle that ever occurred between the popes and the barbaric kingdoms now ensued; but by the sword of the Franks, in obedience to the call of the popes, the Lombards were expelled from Central Italy, and Rome forever delivered from their power, A. D. 756. Their kingdom is finally extinguished by Charlemagne, the great champion and supporter of the papal Church, A. D. 774. Thus the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, and the Lombards came in direct collision with the papacy, and were “plucked up by the roots” and destroyed. We have slightly and unavoidably anticipated the argument, which will soon be fully concluded and explained.

The argument, therefore, under this head is conclusive, and stands thus: The rise of the “little horn” to the full proportion of antichrist is to follow immediately upon the fall of three of the “ten kingdoms,” which three stood directly “before,” or in opposition to, the plans of the papacy; the prophetic descriptions lead us to look to Italy as the theater of the rise and

fall of these “three kingdoms;” the last of the three Italian horns, or kingdoms, fell A. D. 756; therefore this is the proper date of the establishment of the “little horn,” in its full proportion as antichrist, as given Dan. vii, 8, 20, 24.

7. We come now to consider more specifically the facts and manner by which the popes, according to the alleged investiture of St. Peter, became civil rulers, political sovereigns. Among the characteristics of antichrist, as given by Daniel and by John, is the oft-repeated one of *political sovereignty*. The hierarchy enslaved the souls and tyrannized over the consciences of men; but no less definite and indelible, as the mark and test of antichrist, was the assumption of supreme jurisdiction in civil matters. Daniel repeatedly represents this power under the symbol of a “horn” (Dan. vii, 8, 20, 21, 24, 25), the standing symbol of a “kingdom.” “*The ten horns* out of this kingdom,” he says, “are *ten kings* that shall arise.” Just as true as the “ten horns” denoted ten political sovereignties, so true did the eleventh, or “little horn,” which “arose after them,” denote a political sovereignty. So also in Rev. xvii, 9-11, just as true as the “seven heads” denoted seven forms of civil government, so truly did the “eighth” denote an eighth form of civil government. But to make the “ten horns” denote “ten kingdoms,” and the “eleventh,” or “little horn,” denote a priesthood, or ecclesiastical power, would be a violation of the laws of symbolic interpretation. So, also, to make the “seven heads” (Rom. xvii, 9-11) denote seven forms of civil government, or sovereignty, and the “eighth” head to represent a priestly or ecclesiastical power, as such, is an equal violence done to right interpretation.

The question, then, to be here settled simply relates to the time when the pope became a temporal prince, and

when he assumed sovereignty over kings and civil rulers. There is no fact of history better settled than this. Down to near the middle of the eighth century the popes laid no claim to civil supremacy. Pope Gregory II., A. D. 729, in his letter to the emperor Leo says : "The doctrines of the Church are in the hands of the bishops, not of the emperor ; *as the prelates should abstain from the affairs of State, so princes from those of the Church.*" The sovereignty of the emperors down to this date, says Milman, "comprehended religious as well as temporal autoocracy, and of this the clergy, though they had often resisted it, and virtually, perhaps, held it to be abrogated, had never formally, publicly, or deliberately declined the jurisdiction. But now the emperor Leo inauguates the war upon images, and brings the imperial and papal power in direct and fierce collision. Hitherto the papacy had been submissive and loyal to the civil power, but in Gregory it came to an open issue and revolted. The emperor demanded the destruction of images in all the churches, and Gregory, in retaliation, absolved their allegiance to the throne and their duty to support a heretical prince, and thus sounded the tocsin of civil war. This was late in his pontificate, A. D. 730, and led to the final extinction of the power of the emperors in Italy. It marks an epoch in the history of the papacy. Henceforward a career of political ambition and usurpation opened before the boasted successors of St. Peter. Gregory appeals to the Franks for aid, and his negotiations are important indices of the times. "They mark," says Milman, "the transition from the old to the new political system of Europe. They proclaim the severance of all political connection with the East. The pope, as an independent potentate, is forming an alliance with a transalpine sovereign for the liberation

of Italy, and thus taking the lead in that total revolution in the great social system of Europe, the influence of which still survives in the relations between the transalpine nations and Italy. The step to papal aggrandizement, though unpremeditated, is immense. Latin Christendom is forming into a separate realm, of which the pope is the head. "*Henceforth the pope, if not yet a temporal sovereign, is a temporal potentate.*"\* The events which followed during the next twenty-five years are spread out upon the pages of history, and it is not important to our argument to trace them in detail.

Suffice it to say, that when the step had once been taken, the Rubicon once passed, the assumption of the extreme rights of the pope to annul the obligations of civil government once openly made, and the East and West in actual war upon the issue of papal against imperial authority, it was neither in the temper of the pontificate nor in the possibilities of things to recede.

Pending these events Pope Zacharias had the address to hold at bay for ten years the arms of the Lombards, and, without assuming the title, exercised the power and functions of a sovereign of Rome. Pepin, mayor of the palace, is crowned king of the Franks by Pope Zacharias, in opposition to the lawful claims of Childeric, and the allegiance of the subjects was transferred from the rightful to the usurping sovereign. By this act it was asserted and conceded that the power of the pope was above that of the throne. The allegiance of the subject, therefore, became dependent on the will and sanction of the spiritual authority of the successors of St. Peter. France now became the leading monarchy of Europe, and by her concurrent aid and powerful patronage the foundations of the temporal power of antichrist were firmly settled.

\* Milman.

One only acquisition remained to perfect the usurpations of the triple crown; namely, the cession of territorial jurisdiction. The pope must become king in fact and dignity, under whatever title this dignity may be expressed. The events which were to consummate this strange ambition were moving rapidly on. A few years later, under the pontificate of Stephen III., the arms of Pepin were again invoked. That prince is the second anointed king of the Franks, re-enters Italy, subjugates the Lombards, takes from them the ex-archate, and bestows it upon the pope as his patrimony and kingdom forever.\*

This event dates A. D. 756. It is the date of the final dismemberment of Italy from the rule of the Eastern emperors; the date of the intimate and permanent union of the Roman see with the French throne; the date of Transalpine interference with Italian polities; the date of the open assumption and admission of the power of the popes, as the successors of St. Peter and the vicegerents of God, to dissolve the bonds of civil government whenever and wherever government clashes with the plans and purposes of the Church; the date of the temporal sovereignty of the bishop of Rome, and hence a new era both in the form and genius of the great apostasy; the date when antichrist becomes not only a "harlot," the "mother of harlots," but the "little horn" and "beast" and "Babylon." Not that even now antichrist had attained its largest growth of iniquity, or in its secular aspirations its greatest insolence of power, but that here and at this date it fairly

\* The territory conquered and ceded to the Roman see comprehended "Ravenna, Ruminia, Pesaro, Faro, Sesena, Jesi, Forlinopoli, Torli, with the castle of Lussibeo, Montrefetro, Acerra, Monte di Luccano, Serra, San Marino, Urbino, Gagli, Luciolo, Gubbio, Camachio, and Narni, which was severed from the dukedom of Spoleto."

puts on that historic outgrowth and form which answer to the descriptions of prophecy and the intimations given of the date of the twelve hundred and sixty years. From this period the rivalry between the miter and the crown openly raged, wherein the former, firmly seated in the superstitions of the masses, became thenceforward ascendant.

Charlemagne, in A. D. 773, made enlargements of the "holy see" by important additions of territory. Two hundred years afterward Pope Gregory VIII. completed the structure which was laid by Gregory II. and Stephen III. But it was in 756 that we date the antichrist of prophecy, then, and not till then, fully corroborated and sustained by history.

We shall not adduce other branches of the argument leading to the same conclusion, and will submit it upon the grounds herein already set forth. What, then, may we claim as proven?

1. The antichrist of the Apocalypse which struck the eye and engrossed the symbolism of prophecy was an arrogant, corrupt, persecuting, spiritual autocracy, the arch enemy and grand terror of the true saints, the leading obstacle to the advance and triumphs of the Gospel.

2. This antichrist is clearly set forth as combining the distinct and heterogeneous characteristics of spiritual and political sovereignty. By the one it assumed to sway and decide the spiritual, and by the other the civil and temporal, destinies of mankind. It is an apostate Church, organized into a spiritual theocracy, and a political usurpation, corrupting the nations of the earth.

3. This mammoth power, the terror of the saints and the scourge of the earth, is to continue twelve hundred and sixty natural or solar years. It is then to fall to

rise no more. But as, from the nature of the subject as already shown, the event of its falling, as that of its rising, involves the revolutions of opinion and great moral changes of society, and must, therefore, be more or less gradual, as all moral reformations are, it is not to be supposed that the power of antichrist will continue in full force till the end of this period, and then fall in one solar day or year, but that it shall wane, and the triumphant cause of truth advance, till, at the end of the twelve hundred and sixty years from the date herein given, it will become an observable, recognizable, conceded fact of history, marked by positive dates and facts in the constitutions and laws of nations, the changed and elevated tone and customs of society, and in the extension, acts, and attitude of the visible Church, that "Babylon is fallen," for "strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."

4. That the date of this period of twelve hundred and sixty years can be determined in no other way than by comparing the descriptions of prophecy as to the character, form, and aims of antichrist, and the prophetic intimations of the time of his appearance with the established facts of history; and just where, in the progress of history, the Church is clearly seen to have taken on this predicted form and character, just there we are to fix the date of the period in question.

5. As the date of the prevalence and reign of antichrist must, according to the principles here laid down, be fixed at A. D. 756, therefore the end of this period of his reign must be A. D. 756 added to 1260; equal to 2016, the year of the Christian era set by infinite wisdom for this long-prayed-for event. Amen and amen!

The year 2016 is not, however, given as an absolute date, but as a close approximation. Immediately after the fall of antichrist (and it will be recognized in its time), the antichristian nations and peoples will wait its catastrophe (Rev. xviii), and all in heaven will chant a “hallelujah.” Rev. xix, 1-8. Then follows the rapid spread of the Gospel (Rev. xix, 11-16), the binding of Satan (Rev. xx, 1-3); then the millennium, etc. Rev. xx, 4-6. The connection of the downfall of antichrist with the glorious triumph of King Messiah is thus given by Daniel, chap. vii, 24-27: “And another [king] shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time [twelve hundred and sixty years.] But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE SEVENTH TRUMPET PERIOD.

Various Separate and Independent Observations on the Seventh Trumpet, Embracing Chapters xi to xv inclusive—Regular Chronological Order Resumed at Chapter xvi.

WE have now reached the period of the Church's great apostasy, and of the conflicts and sufferings and final victory of the protesting, suffering, and faithful few. In this new departure of the unfolding scheme of prophecy we find ourselves in the midst of new and fearful symbolism, and geographically set back in Europe, especially in Italy, and most of all at Rome. This is made clear in Rev. xvii.

The great idea of the tenth chapter of Revelation is the announcement that the persecuting power, which had been the terror of the true Church for centuries, should end in the seventh trumpet period. Thus verses 1-7: "I saw a mighty angel come down from heaven, . . . and he had in his hand a little book open. . . . And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, . . . sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things that are therein, *that the time shall not be yet* ;\* but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, *when he shall sound*, the mystery of God shall be finished."

In proof of the correctness of this version it is immediately declared that "the mystery of God shall be

\* See note on p. 57, as vindicating this translation.

finished [not now] but in the days of the voice of the seventh trumpet, when he shall sound."

It is further stated by the angel to John, in opposition to the idea of the immediate closing of the epoch, "Thou must prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." Ver. 11. This clearly implies a prolonged struggle of the Church in evangelistic work. The taking of the "little book," or roll, out of the angel's hand and eating it, must be understood mentally as a figure for spiritually analyzing and digesting its contents. Thus Jer. xv, 16, "Thy words we found and I did eat them;" so also Ezek. iii, 1-3; John vi, 52-63. The figure is not infrequent. The solemnity of the oath (vers. 5-7) indicates the awful import and certainty of the contents of the "little book." The purport and substance of the vision is comprehended in the brief words, "The mystery of God shall be finished in the days of the voice of the seventh angel;" that is, during the epoch of the seventh trumpet. Chap. xi, 15. The "mystery of God" is the mysterious dispensation in which "the long suffering of the Lord" allows his enemies, and the enemies of the Church, to persecute and oppress the righteous. When this mystery shall be explained the millennium will dawn upon the world.

The tenth chapter of Revelation, therefore, is a prelude to the seventh trumpet epoch, which in its time is to be resolved into seven vials of the wrath of God. But before resuming the regular order of chronology, in the epochs of the phials, we are to explain, so far as we may be able, the intervening chapters, namely, chapters xi to xv, inclusive. These we shall treat, not as progressive chronological steps in the seventh trumpet period, but as so many independent views given of the same period, and taken from

different stand-points; so that we shall find ourselves at the end of chapter xiv chronologically where we began; namely, at the beginning of chapter xi. This is evident from the fact that in five instances within the period now before us, the epoch of antichrist—twelve hundred and sixty years—is distinctly assumed in apocalyptic symbolism; namely, “forty and two months” (Rev. xi, 2); “a thousand two hundred and three-score days,” (ver. 3; same in xii, 6); “a time, times, and half a time” (ver. 14); and again “forty and two months” (xiii, 5). After these two distinct events are to take place: the fall of Babylon (chap. xiv, 8) and the reaping of the “harvest” and the “vintage of the earth.” Chap. xiv, 14–20.

These are distinct occurrences within the seventh trumpet, or, which is the same, the seven vials, or the period of antichrist, and we shall endeavor to reach their meaning, but shall accept the regular successive order of events to lie with the seven vials. This is an important consideration, simply indispensable to a right understanding of these intervening chapters.

Another fact should be considered. It is evident from the sense of the passage that the verses 14–19 of chapter xi are out of place, and should be put at the opening of the chapter. Any practical Bible student will see it is better suited to the opening of chapter xi. As, therefore, it is a simple change of place in the same chapter, not in any way affecting the sense, but only its relative order, we venture to place it immediately after chapter x, at the opening of chapter xi.

The reason for thus placing and treating chapters x to xv is, they are assigned to the same period in the text; namely, to the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist, which also is the period of the seventh trumpet, or the group of the vial epochs.

These points will be treated in their places.

We will first give the seventh trumpet in its order; then the four independent and separate views, given at different points of observation, each covering the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist, and then take up the group of vial epochs in succession.

*The Seventh Trumpet Period* is thus opened: “The second woe is past; and, behold, the third cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Chap. xi, 14, 15. Thus the first object that struck the prophet’s vision was the millennium. “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.” So also, twelve hundred and sixty years later, when antichrist was fallen, John saw the fulfillment of the promised millennium, and said: “I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.” Rev. xx, 4. This was the outcome of the seventh trumpet epoch. The result of ages of suffering and faithful waiting and watching he now saw in vision. On the opening of a scene which reached such a blissful result all heaven joined—saints and angels—in solemn and triumphant praise, saying, “We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead [martyrs] that they should be judged [vindicated], and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants and the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and destroy them that destroy the earth.” Vers. 17, 18. To close the scene, and to assure the yet suffering saints of the faithfulness of God, “the temple of God was opened in heaven,

and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail," to assure them that God is faithful, and is able to fulfill his word.

1. *The opening of the first vision is thus given:* "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." Vers. 1, 2.

The "temple of God, the altar, and them that worship therein," represent the covenanted people, the true Church, or true worshipers of God. The court that was "without the temple," which he was to "leave out" and not measure, represents the uncovenanted people, the Gentiles, or nations not in covenant with God. The act of "measuring" the temple is emblematic of absolute possession and protection. The act of leaving out and not measuring the court which is without and which is given to the Gentiles, is emblematic of repudiated title of covenant relation and rights. These spurious worshipers may occupy "the court that is without the temple," but their title to the covenant is invalid, "and the holy city shall they tread under foot;" that is, they will treat the true worshipers with contempt and persecution, and will tread them under foot "forty and two months."

This notation of time is important. It is used five times in the chapters we are now specially treating. In prophetic time a month is always put for thirty days, and a day for a year. "Forty and two months," therefore, are exactly twelve hundred and sixty solar days, or years. This is the well-known period of anti-

christ. There is not a prophetic period in Holy Writ more definitely ascertained than this, as the progress of our inquiry will show.

2. *The second characteristic of this antichristian period is thus given*: “And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.”

The witnesses are those who testify to the true and pure standard of Christian doctrine and worship. “They shall prophesy;” that is, as nearly as the English can represent it, *they shall preach*. The word is broad in its significance, comprehensive of announcement, teaching, testimony, exhortation—all that is needful to bring the Gospel to the understanding and conscience. These evangelists shall deliver their messages “clothed in sackcloth”—indicating suffering and persecution. The period of this peril and sorrow shall continue “a thousand two hundred and threescore days;” that is, twelve hundred and sixty years, reckoning a day for a year, thirty days for a month, and twelve hundred and sixty days for twelve hundred and sixty years. This is according to the settled method of computing prophetic time. As to the “two witnesses,” the reason of there being *two* does not appear certain. The most probable one is that which considers it an allusion to the lowest competent number, in courts of law, to establish conviction or sustain a cause. Thus, Deut. xvii, 6: “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death.” So also 1 Tim. v, 19: “Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.” Again, Heb. x, 28: “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses.” Thus, under the persecutions, and the horrible sacrifice of human life, the two witnesses bore their testimony for the pure and unadulterated Gospel

of Christ. Can any one who has ever read the bloody pages of Christian martyrology doubt that this is a true and faithful record of the true Church for a thousand years, from the eighth to the eighteenth centuries? The history of the Waldenses and Albigenses, and their successors, the Protestants—not to mention the struggles against the Saracens and Turks—present a horrid picture of the struggles of the Church for purity, the like of which the world has never seen. What is yet to come, in order that “the mystery of God shall be finished” (chap. x, 7), only God can tell, in prophecies yet to be fulfilled. The “two witnesses,” therefore, we take as the lowest number of witnesses to sustain a cause.

The two witnesses are called, in verse 4, “the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks”—a clear reference to Zech. iv. In turning to the place, we learn this to be the idea of the symbol; namely, that as the great lamp in Solomon’s temple needed frequent replenishment of oil, and the supply became perpetual, in the vision, only by the two olive-trees standing on either side of the chandelier and pouring out a perpetual stream as from living fountains, so God would make the humble and apparently inadequate labor of the people to be the mighty means of perpetual light, and of accomplishing his great purpose. The doctrine, aside from the vision, is given in verse 6: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” In returning to Rev. xi, we accept the fifth verse as a warning of certain judgment on the persecutor. The certainty of punishment is a fundamental element of sound government and a great deterrent of sin. In verse 16 the strength of faith of the martyrs—of them that keep the word of God under persecution—is declared equal to those mighty men of old who wrought

miracles—like Elijah, who had power to “shut heaven, that it rain not” (1 Kings xvii, 1; Jas. v, 17, 18); or Moses, who could “turn water to blood.” Exod. vii, 17. See also Jer. i, 9, 10; Hos. vi, 5. Thus the dignity of a faithful martyr, however despised by men, does, in the estimation of God, rank the highest honor of the kingdom.

In verse 7 the occurrence of the word “*beast*,” the same “that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, and shall make war against the witnesses” of Christ, fully identifies the actor as antichrist, and the period of his operations to be the same as the technical twelve hundred and sixty years. For a time this great enemy of the Church shall prevail against the witnesses of Jesus, “and shall overcome them and kill them,” and the corrupt sympathizers with antichrist, or the “*beast*,” shall take knowledge of them that they are truly overcome and killed, at which the enemies of Christ will have great rejoicing. Vers. 7-10. But their triumph will be short. After “three days and a half” (ver. 11) “the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet.” This sudden return to life of the victorious witnesses caused great surprise and fear, for not only did the faithful witnesses re-appear on earth, but now it appeared plain and public that they assuredly went to heaven, a fact that had been disputed and denied by their persecutors. And not only did the witnesses or martyrs of Jesus gain heaven, but the judgment of God against the persecutors was made public to the nations, for “the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell,” and much life was lost, so that the remnant of the wicked people were forced to honor God by confessing that the witnesses of Jesus and their testimony were of God. Ver. 12. This appears to us to be substantively the

sense of the symbolic text. Vers. 3-13. It is worthy of remark that when the armies of the pope and the fires and tortures of the Inquisition had nearly extinguished the Albigenses and Waldenses in France, and scattered the distressed remnants into other parts of Europe—when the members of the true Church were called the “remnant of her seed”—when every thing seemed quiet, every heresy put down, and the Christian world acquiesced in the absurdity and blasphemy of the papal usurper—suddenly Martin Luther appeared, the witnesses of Jesus quickly multiplied, and in the result a large part of the papal nations—England, Scotland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and Germany—renounced papacy and accepted the Protestant faith. Thus “the tenth part of the [Sodomitish] city fell.” Vers. 8, 13.

III. *We find the third independent glance at the characteristic traits of antichrist* in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse. The symbols are bold, animated, sometimes obscured, yet startling and new. It is not easy to be always sure of doing justice to the style, or to the exposition of its metaphors, yet we apprehend the general and material parts lie open to view. The first startling figure which appears in the scene is given in verse 1: “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head twelve stars.” Ver. 1.

That this “woman” represents the Church or living witnesses is evident from the references to her in the further unfolding of the drama. Thus, in verse 6, it is said, “The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared for her of God;” and in verse 14: “And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness.” And in verse 17:

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed;” and this “remnant of her seed” is specifically called “them which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” This is not the only place where the Church is thus symbolized. In Rev. xix, 7-9, the Church is called the “wife” of Christ, and their “marriage” is an occasion of great rejoicing; and in chapter xxi, 2: “John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;” and in verse 9 the Church is called “the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” See also 2 Cor. xi, 2; Isa. liv, 6, and lxii, 4, 5.

This woman appears in glory with the emblems of victory and purity; “clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet.” The stars in her crown not only indicated royalty, but the number “twelve” is the sacred number of completeness and covenant union both in the Old and New Testaments. This fully identifies the symbol of the twelve as the Church of Christ. The “travailing in birth,” etc., must be understood as expressive of the difficulty and peril of making new converts to Christ, when to make the profession of Christ is certain death and torture. Verses 3 and 4 present the persecuting power as a “great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head.” This is clearly defined as a Roman, antichristian, persecuting power, the terror of all true saints, as has been stated in Chapter vi of this work, and shall be noticed again hereafter. There is no symbolic character in the Apocalypse better ascertained than is this Roman dragon and beast. The tail of this dragon “drew the third part of the stars of heaven.” “Stars” represent subordinate rulers, while “heaven” is a symbol of imperial or supreme dominion. The supreme dragon-power drew

after him, in abject submission, the third of the governments of the world, “and cast them to the earth” in contemptuous scorn. His “*tail* drawing the third part of the stars,” etc., gives a shading of degradation and autocracy which fitly illustrates the relation of the hierarchy to the crowned heads of Europe in the Middle Ages. See Deut. xxviii, 13 ; Isa. ix, 14, 15 ; xix, 15.

The woman, as we have said, is the Church. Vers. 1-6. She was performing her high-priest functions as the Church of Christ, in pain and peril, as women in travail. Verse 5 is a retrospective glance of Christ’s birth as being in the jaws of death, in the midst of world-wide opposers, “the dragon standing before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.” Ver. 4. The “man child” which was born “was to rule all [rebellious] nations with a rod of iron,” but was himself in peril, being in a world of hostility, and protected only by the absolute interposition and power of God, so that, as it were, “he was caught up unto God, and to his throne” (vers. 4, 5) ; that is, ascended to the supremest power of earthly monarchs, so that for a time his attention was drawn off from persecution of the saints. At this opportune exigency “the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three-score days,” or years—that being the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist.

The “ruling of nations with a rod of iron” is affirmed and predicted only of Christ ; and of him only as he shall treat rebellious subjects who “take counsel together against Jehovah, and against his Messiah.” Psa. ii, 2. The second Psalm and Rev. ii, 27, fully sustain the application of it here. Dean Alford says the language employed “leaves no possibility of doubt who was

here intended. The ‘man child’ (ver. 5) is the Lord Jesus Christ, *and none other.*”

The wonderful “war in heaven,” described in verses 7-9, must be understood as the struggle of the Church against antichrist, who was now swaying dominion over supreme governments, especially in Europe. The battles are represented as fought first in the chief governments, or powers. These are formidable and cruel, as in Isa. xiv, 13, 14. When the patronage of these could no longer be relied on, the dragon intensified his wrath upon the defenseless remnant. Thus the record says: “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.” Ver. 13. And that the supporters of the dragon power shall, in the end, turn and hate and fight against him, is clearly declared, with some change of symbolism, in Rev. xvii, 16, 17: “And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” We shall return to this interpretation when we come to consider the seventeenth chapter, of which this is a literal comment.

In the apocalyptic order an interlude is given in the special form of chant, recognizing the moral forces hitherto employed by the witnessing Church, with an outlook upon the ultimate triumph: “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Vers. 10-12. After this the prophetic record is resumed. Vers. 13-17.

The “wings of a great eagle,” given to the woman, are mentioned here simply as a symbol of strength,

victory, and rapid passage. Exod. xix, 4; Deut. xxviii, 49, and xxxii, 11, 12; Jer. xlviii, 40; Hos. viii, 1. The feeble Church flies before the dragon and beast. The Old Testament is familiar also with the figure of the rapid overflow of waters, inundating and desolating the land, illustrating the sudden invasion of a conquering and pillaging army. Dan. ix, 26, and xi, 10, 26; Isa. viii, 7, 8. And “the earth” (ver. 16), which “helped the woman,” and “opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth,” may represent the friendly people and provinces and nations that received the fugitives and repelled the dragon. All this literally illustrates the history of the Waldenses and Albigenses, who for five hundred years fought the papacy at the peril and cost of life to millions. Through all this sanguinary period “the dragon went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Verse 17. On this line, and for a pure Gospel, the witnessing Church, from age to age, and from country to country, with spiritual arms and armies, have fought for “freedom to worship God” according to the Gospel.

In verse 16, the word “earth” is again used (pleonastically from verse 9) as helping the persecuted woman (the “Church”), and is here put in contrast with “heaven,” from which, after a long conflict, the “dragon” had been cast out unto the earth. If *heaven* denotes, in symbolic language, supreme governing power, which will not be denied, the *earth* must mean the opposite. Nothing less could sustain the antithesis. We must, therefore, consider it to signify the common uncovenanted people with their subordinate rulers. This distinguishes from “heaven” the symbol of supreme rank and government.

The term of continuance of these visions is the same as is every-where given, both by John and by Daniel, to be twelve hundred and sixty years; or, if reckoned in symbolic or prophetic time, “for a time, times, and half a time.”

IV. *The fourth prophetic glance at the epochs of anti-christ* is contained in the thirteenth chapter of the Apocalypse. The apostle says: “I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns.” That is, “a new dominion, or government, which should owe its origin to the commotions of the people;”\* the “sea” being the symbol of nations in the commotion of war, as in Psa. lxv, 7.

“Which stilleth the noise of the *seas*  
The noise of their *waves*,  
And the *tumult of the people*.”

Vitrunga says: “The world *without* the Church comes under the name of *sea*, as being in continual commotion, as incapable of cultivation, as the seat of storms and tempests, and dangerous to navigate. Hence the wicked are compared to it in Isa. lvii, 20.”

It is a notable fact that the antichristian “beast,” or papacy, did arise out of the civil commotions and revolutions of Europe, and could not have acquired its amazing power had the Roman Empire stood united as in the reign of Augustus, or even of Constantine, three hundred years later.

In verse 2 the greediness of the “bear,” the swiftness of the “leopard,” and the strength of the “lion” are descriptive of this new political and ecclesiastical power. John says (ver. 3): “And I saw one of his heads [or forms of government] as it were wounded to

\* Lowman.

death ; and his deadly wound was healed : and all the world wondered after the beast.” The Romish “head,” or “beast,” is the same as is described chapter xvii, 11, of whom it is said, “the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth,” etc. The beast that “was, and is not,” is the same as that which was, “as it were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed.”

There is no power or form of government within the Roman domain that so aptly applies to all the conditions as the history of the Lombards in their relation of war to the papacy. It will be considered that the prophetic record does not state that one of the heads of the beast was wounded unto death, but that one of his heads was, “*as it were* (ὡς), wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed.” The wound was only seemingly fatal.

It was in the year A. D. 726 that the war between the Eastern emperor Leo and Pope Gregory II. at Rome, on the use of images, began. Politics entered into the causes of the war. “Between the papal see and the Lombard sovereigns—indeed, between the Lombards and the Italian clergy—there seems almost from the first to last to have prevailed an implacable and inexplicable antipathy. Of all the conquerors of Italy, these (according to more favorable historians) orderly and peaceful people are represented as the most irreclaimably savage. The taint of their original Arianism was indelible. No terms are too strong with the popes to express their detestation of the Lombards.” In the sixth century they had passed the Alps, and invaded Northern Italy. While other invading barbarians had more or less softened the rugged features of their former lives by contact with Roman life and habits, the Lombards obstinately remained in their ancestral rudeness. Their religion was Arianism, which they had

partially embraced, "but had in no degree mitigated the ferocity of their manners. They had no awe of religious men, no reverence for religious places; they burned churches, laid waste monasteries, slew ecclesiastics, and violated consecrated virgins with no more dread or remorse than ordinary buildings or profane enemies. So profound was the terror of the Lombard invasion that the despairing Italians, even the highest ecclesiastics, beheld it as an undoubted sign of the coming day of judgment."\*

Thirty years of distress, in open war or faithless negotiations, followed, till in A. D. 755 we find Astolph, the Lombard king, settled down before Rome in regular siege. To avoid this, Pope Stephen II. had appealed to Pepin, King of France, and to Emperor Leo at Constantinople, saying to the latter that "without an army to back the imperial demands, *all was lost*." But Astolph pressed the siege. "Not all the litanies, not all the solemn processions to the most revered altars of the city, in which the pope himself, with naked feet, bore the cross, and the whole people followed with ashes on their heads, and with a wild howl of agony implored the protection of God against the blaspheming Lombards, arrested for an instant his progress."†

From Leo there was no hope of help. The war against the images had alienated the Byzantine emperor from the pope too deeply. All hope rested on Pepin, to whom, and his predecessors, he was so deeply indebted.

Three letters were dispatched in quick succession. The pope himself goes in depth of winter to enlist the powerful king of France against the Lombards. All depends now on the timely help of Pepin. The letters betray an agony of distress, urging instant help by all

\* Milman.

† *Ibid.*

the saints in heaven and by his own eternal salvation. Gregory's third letter declares it to be direct from heaven, written by St. Peter himself. In it he says: "I, Peter the apostle, protest, admonish, and conjure you, the most Christian kings, Peter, Charles, and Carloman, with all the hierarchy, bishops, abbots, priests, and all monks; all judges, dukes, counts, and the whole people of the Franks. The mother of God likewise adjures you, and admonishes and commands you, she as well as the thrones and dominions, and all the host of heaven, to save the beloved city of Rome from the detested Lombards. If ye hasten, I, Peter the apostle, promise you my protection in this life, and in the next will prepare for you the most glorious mansions in heaven, and will bestow on you the everlasting joys of paradise. Make common cause with my people of Rome and I will grant whatever ye may pray for. I conjure you not to yield up this city to be lacerated and tormented by the Lombards, lest your own souls be lacerated and tormented in hell, with the devil and his pestilential angels. Of all nations under heaven the Franks are highest in the esteem of St. Peter; to me you owe all your victories. Obey, and obey speedily, and, by my suffrage, our Lord Jesus Christ will give you in this life length of days, security, victory; in the life to come will multiply his blessing upon you, among his saints and angels."

It need not be said that the compliant Pepin came, the enemy submitted, and the provinces which constituted the ex-archate were now given to the papacy as the "patrimony of St. Peter." Thus one of the heads of the beast (one of the forms of government of the beast, namely, the papacy) was, "*as it were* [seemingly] wounded unto death; and his deadly wound was healed." Not that one of the popes was dead, or near to death,

and was healed, but one of the forms of government which the popes represented—the papacy—was near to extinction and was restored. We cannot assert what would or might have been had Pepin declined the urgent call of Stephen; but, in all human probability, and judging from the light of all existing facts, if the pope had failed to elicit the interference of Pepin the papacy would have been a totally different power from what it was and what it aspired to be, and Italy would have been a Lombard empire, and the pope and bishops the degraded vassals of one of the most barbarian princes of Europe. Indeed, this is implied in the references given in the connection in this vision. It is implied that had the “deadly wound” not been healed great and wonderful changes would have followed, disastrous to the followers of the “beast,” or form of government. “All the world wondered after the beast,” at the healing of the “head,” or form of government. It seemed like a literal resurrection, and the healing of the head gave him great and sudden influence over the nations—“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Ver. 8. “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and *to overcome them*: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” Ver 7.

In continuance of the vision a new scene is introduced. John says: “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed,” etc. Rev. xiii, 11-13.

The fact that this new power is called a “beast” fixes

his antichristian date and character. His "coming up out of the earth" denotes his ignoble origin, earth-born, grounded in the popular superstitions, not in "the wisdom that is from above." His "two horns like a lamb" was his profession of lamb-like meekness and innocence, such as any impostor might assume. "He spake as a dragon;" his real character betrays him when his doctrine and mission are announced. "He exerciseth all the powers of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed ;" that is, the object of his organization and investiture of power is for the unity, regularity, and final determination of the true doctrine and worship, according to the standard of "the first beast," "saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by the sword and did live," as mentioned in verse 3. And for the accomplishment of his mission "he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him," which is delegated to him for this purpose.

In verse 15 is given the characteristic function of his mission; namely, that "he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast *should be killed.*" And, to make this office more effectual, another distinguishing feature of this antichristian character is given, which is, "that no man should buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name;" "and he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads." In verse 15 the non-conformist is to be killed; in verses 16, 17, he is doomed to starvation. In chapter xiv, 9, 10, the issue is

accepted by the martyrs and published by the angel: “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.”

In chapter xiii, 18, there is given, partly in mystic form and partly in common reckoning, a glance at the date of antichrist. John says: “Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.” The phrase, “It is the number of a man” would simply import that the reckoning is to be in common, not in mystic or symbolic, numerals. We take this number of 666 to measure the time from the date of utterance by the apostle to the terminus of 666 natural years therefrom. John the apostle was, according to the best authority, in Patmos at the close of the reign of the emperor Domitian, A. D. 96. At this date he was liberated and returned to Ephesus. At this date his visions ended. If, now, we add to this date the number of 666, the date of John’s writing, we have the sum of 762, making six years more than the date of antichrist, as we have elsewhere given. But this difference is not sufficient to set aside the argument. As Mr. Lowman (whom we mainly follow here) has well said, “This small difference will be easily accounted for, either by allowing some small uncertainty as to the time of vision, or some small variation from the precise year, for the sake of making the number of just 666, which has more of the air of a prophetic number than 662. Possibly this number may reach four years beyond the investiture,

to take in the full and actual possession of what was granted to the Church as St. Peter's patrimony. This way of counting is sufficiently certain to determine who the beast is, as it points out the time when he was to receive his power with such certainty that it cannot be mistaken; with as much certainty as Daniel's weeks pointed out the time of the coming of the Messiah." It should also be considered that in prophetic times the object is not so much to give exact solar dates as to identify characteristic epochs, and the traceable order and succession of events, according to their influence on the Church and society.

In the fifth verse of the chapter now before us the well-known prophetic indication of the period of antichrist is given. John says: "And power was given unto him [the beast] to continue forty and two *months*." A month, in prophetic time, is thirty days, and forty-two months would be twelve hundred and sixty days, and counting a day for a year we have twelve hundred and sixty years—every-where put down as the period of antichrist. This period of the three beasts in chapter xiii is properly considered as having a co-ordinate and yet subordinate life with the first.

To return now to the consideration of the "third beast" (vers. 11-17), the questions arise, What is the purport of his mission as given in prophecy? and, What is its historic interpretation? In answer to the first question we say, in general terms, the language describes a power delegated by the first beast and wholly devoted to him; a power invested with supreme authority, and for specific ends; a power superior to law, wholly irresponsible to civil government, or to laws which embrace the rights of religious worship; and finally, authority "to kill as many as would not worship the image of the first beast." We search in vain to find such a power in

history, except in the Inquisition, blasphemously called "holy office."

"Inquisition is the name given to a tribunal of the Roman Catholic Church whose function is to seek out and punish heretics and unbelievers."

From apostolic times the Church has exercised disciplinary authority, and the right of excommunication for immoralities and fundamental error. But late in the fourth century (382) we find the first example of inflicting the death penalty for simply religious causes.

In the eighth century it received a firmer organization, and in the twelfth century it became a general institution of the Christian or Roman Catholic Church. The Inquisition is based on the assumption that as the Church is a theocracy, and as the pope is God's vicegerent, so all error or dissent is of the nature of treason, and, if persisted in, is punishable by death. It is, therefore, inferred as a primary duty of the popes to use all means to suppress and punish all deviations from the standard of faith as established by them. And this standard of faith is not based upon the language of Holy Scripture interpreted according to the laws of language, but upon the interpretations of the Christian fathers, especially of the first four centuries, the books of the Apocrypha, the decisions of councils and synods, and the voice and sanction of the popes. These are held as of equal authority in the interpretation of Scripture. But the bishop of Rome is held to express and contain the fountain of all spiritual authority. "The modern theory of Roman theologians is that all spiritual authority whatever flows from the fountain of the see of Rome, the pope being universal bishop, and other bishops having no true jurisdiction unless they receive it mediately or immediately from him."\*

\* Blunt's *Dictionary of Doctrinal and Historical Theology*. Art., "Spiritual Jurisdiction."

The animus of all inquisitorial proceedings is given in the record of the code of inquisition of Toulouse, A. D. 1232.\* “The court sat in profound secrecy; no advocate might appear before the tribunal; no witness was confronted with the accused; who were the informers, what the charges, except the vague charge of heresy, no one knew. The suspected heretic was first summoned to declare, on oath, that he would speak the truth, the whole truth, of all persons whatsoever, living or dead, with himself or like himself under suspicion of heresy or Vaudism. If he refused he was cast into a dungeon—a dungeon the darkest in those dreary ages—the most dismal, the most foul, the most noisome. No falsehood was too false, no craft too crafty, no trick too base, for this calm, systematic moral torture, which was to wring further confession against himself, denunciation against others. If the rack, the pulleys, the thumb-screw, and the boots, if not yet invented or applied, it was not in mercy. It was the deliberate object to break the spirit. The prisoner was told that there were witnesses, undeniable witnesses, against him; if convicted by such witnesses his death was inevitable. In the meantime his food was to be slowly, gradually diminished, till body and soul were prostrate. He was then to be left in darkness, solitude, silence. Then are to come one or two of the faithful, dexterous men, who are to speak in gentle words of interest and sympathy. ‘Fear not to confess that you have had dealings with those men, the teachers of heresy, because they seemed to you men of holiness and virtue; wiser than you have been deceived.’ These dexterous men were to speak of the Bible, the gospels, of the epistles of St. Paul, to talk the very language, the Scripture language, of the heretics. ‘These foxes,’ it was said, ‘can be unearthed only

\* Milman, vol. vi, pp. 32, 33.

by fox-like cunning.' But if all this art failed, or did not perfectly succeed, then came terror and the goading to despair. 'Die you must—bethink you of your soul.' Upon which, if the desperate man said 'If I must die, I will die in the true faith of the Gospel,' he had made his confession; justice claimed the victim." "Nothing that the sternest or most passionate historian has revealed, nothing that the most impressive romance-writer could have imagined, can surpass the cold, systematic treachery and cruelty of these so-called judicial formalaries."

The first characteristic trait of this third beast, which we now notice, is the plenary power which he exerciseth over all the earth. "He exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." It is familiarly known that the popes invested the inquisitors with unlimited power for exterminating all heresy, so called; that is, all dissent from the popes. The forces of civil power, even to levying troops, were put in their hands.

To impress the mind with the terrors of death by starvation, it is directly announced that "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, shall receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Vers. 16-17. And again, the third beast "had power to give life unto the image of the [first] beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and *cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*" Ver. 15.

Thus the death penalty is made sure, either by direct execution, or by starvation, or by torture. In various forms and in different parts of Europe the dissenting

Christians had been persecuted and pursued, which forced them to retire to the more remote parts in Northern Italy and Southern France. In 1216 Dominic was created "inquisitor-general," with plenary power to use all ecclesiastic and civil authority to exterminate heretics. He says himself as to his future plan and purpose: "If the spiritual and ecclesiastical arms were not sufficient for this end, it was his fixed determination to call in the aid of the civil magistrate to excite and compel the Catholic princes to take arms against heretics, that the very memory of them might be entirely destroyed."

In 1163 a synod was convened at Tours, a city in France, at which all the bishops and priests in the country of Toulouse were strictly enjoined "to take care and to forbid, under pain of excommunication, every person from presuming to give reception or the least assistance to the followers of this heresy; *to have no dealings with them in buying and selling, that thus being deprived of the common necessities of life they might be compelled to repent of the evil of their way.*" And further, that "whosoever should dare to contravene this order should be excommunicated as a partner in their guilt." And, lastly, that "as many of them as could be found should be imprisoned by the Catholic princes, and punished with the forfeiture of all their substance."

If we may place any reliance upon writers of unimpeachable veracity, "the armies employed by Pope Innocent III. destroyed above two hundred thousand of them in the short space of a few months." As the armies of the popes enlisted only for a brief period, new levies must be made. Immediately upon the call a new army is enlisted of more than one hundred thousand men, who stormed and sacked the city of Bieziers, and in-

discriminately massacred twenty-three thousand men and women, Albigenses and Catholics. When it was asked if Catholics were to be protected and heretics only slain, the answer was, “Kill them all; the Lord knoweth them that are his.”

“As to the ordinary manner of proceeding with such as fell into their hands captives of war, a single extract from Limborth’s history may suffice to show. A person of the name of Robert, he says (1207), who had been of the sect of the Albigenses, but afterward joined the Dominicans, supported by the authority of the princes and magistrates, burned all who persisted in their heresy. Within two months he caused fifty, without distinction of sex, either to be burned or buried alive, whence he was called ‘the Hammer of the Heretics.’ In 1211 they took the city of Alby, and there put numbers to death. They took La Vaur by storm, and burned in it multitudes of the Albigenses. They hanged Almeric, the governor of that city, who was of a very noble family, and beheaded eighty of the inferior rank, not sparing the females. They threw the sister of Almeric, who was the principal lady of the sect of the Albigenses, into a well, and covered her with stones. Afterward they conquered Carcum, and put sixty men to death. They seized on Pulchra Vallis, a large city near Toulouse, committed four hundred Albigenses to the flames, and hanged fifty more.” Again, “After the capture of La Vaur, the towns Les Cures, Robastains, Guiller, St. Marcel, St. Anthonia, Causec, and Moisac were stormed, and a great massacre made of the towns-men by the conquerors. The castle of Perre, in the Agenois, having, after a long siege, capitulated, seventy of the soldiers were hanged, and the others who adhered to their errors were burned alive. In Paris itself fourteen, who were of the teachers among the Albigenses,

expired in the flames. The havoc was so great that in 1228 three archbishops found it necessary to intercede with the monks of the Inquisition to defer a little their work of imprisonment until the pope could be apprised of the immense numbers apprehended—numbers so great that it was impossible to defray the charge of their subsistence, or even to provide stone and mortar to build prisons for them.\*

It has been computed that, in the southern provinces of France, and within the first twenty years of the thirteenth century, a million of persons bearing the name of Albigenses were put to death for their religion.

In Spain and Portugal the atrocious spirit of the Inquisition has been fully developed and attested. Since the latter part of the thirteenth century its deadly influence upon their civilization and religion has caused them to lose their rank among the nations.

The inquisitorial persecutions continued, with variable success, in most of the kingdoms of Europe for three hundred and fifty years, and in its abated form till the present century. It does not seem necessary to refer further to the Inquisition, as it will be presented more fully in a future chapter; nor could we have said less in justice to the argument. Volumes might be given in proof of the fact that the Inquisition of the Romish Church, in its blasphemy, its hypocrisy, its cruelty, and its historic relations, sustains the hypothesis that it is the third “beast,” described in Rev. xiii, 11-18. His “lamb-like” profession, and his “dragon-like” ferocity (verse 11); his investment of plenary power for the extermination of the so-called heretics, point unmistak-

\* See Jones's *History of the Church*, with special reference to the Waldenses and Albigenses. Third American from the fifth London edition.

ably to the recognizable characteristics of the “man of sin.”

5. We now come to consider the import of chapters xiv and xv. In chapter xiv, 1-5, the type of gospel martyrs is defined, and a song of victory given. “They sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders.” Ver. 3. The “hundred and forty and four thousand” is a mystic number, literally the square of twelve, denoting the twelve apostles and the twelve tribes of Israel. But the numbers are not to be taken literally but figuratively, denoting *fullness*; as if the number of the triumphant saints was beyond computation.

In verses 6, 7, the apostle saw “an angel fly in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,” and warning the nations, meanwhile, that “the hour of God’s judgment is come,” and that they should “worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” This is not a call to the final judgment, but to acknowledge and fear the approaching and impending judgments of God, which will be revealed simultaneously with the faithful preaching of the Gospel.

In verses 8-11 the nations are warned that “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Then follow awful warnings of judgments soon to come upon those that adhere to the mystic Babylon. This Babylon is the same as the “beast” in verses 1, 2, 3; the same as antichrist, and the “harlot.” Chap. xvii, 5. “Here is the [necessity for] patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” If there be any thing reliable in unfulfilled prophecy, it is that in the latter days,

before the millennium, there will be closer grappling with antichrist and with all forms of worldliness than we find in these days; a greater call for patience, greater self-denial, greater Christian consecration, more of the spirit of Christ, a keeping closer to the martyr-like type of Christian experience than now. The watch-word was given in previous visions: "And they overcame him [the dragon] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." Chap. xii, 11. The watch-word now is: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Ver. 12. And to refresh and strengthen their faith and patience the glorious declaration is given (ver. 13), "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

The vision given in verses 14-20 must be interpreted in close proximity with the foregoing portion of the chapter. The pervading ideas are the thickening judgments of God upon the antichristian nations. As the prophet foresaw the fall of Babylon (antichrist), verse 8, and as this unmistakably locates the vision at the dawn of the millennium, so here, in the vision of "the harvest of the earth," we are to look for kindred revelations in great sufferings and in great victories. Let the reader carefully compare especially verses 8-12 with verses 15-20. The latter is full of suggestion. The scene opens at verse 14. One like unto the Son of man appears upon a white cloud, with a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. He is reminded by an angel that "the harvest of the earth is ripe," and "the time is come for him to reap." "And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth

was reaped." Ver. 16. Another angel is commanded "to thrust in his sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine," etc. Thus the wheat harvest and vintage, the chief products of the year, are gathered.

We cannot give what we deem to be the sense of the passage without giving the literal import of the metaphors. First, the language, "thrust in thy sickle and reap," is a command to execute judgment. This is not a call to the final judgment, but for the execution of special judgment upon those nations which had contested and opposed the kingdom of Christ. Secondly, the two, and only two, harvests which call for the special judgments of God for interference comprehend the totality and extent, as well as sharpness and severity, of the antagonism to the kingdom of Christ by the hostile nations so far as relates to their active persecution, their organized opposition and oppression. John speaks from the heart of Jewish life and custom. The Jews knew two principal harvests—the wheat harvest in May, and the vintage, in its third and last grape gathering, in September.\* These represented the staple products or harvests of the year. This is precisely the basis of the metaphor. Verse 16 represents the first or wheat harvest; and verses 19, 20, the vintage or "the vine of the earth," which was "cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God." Verse 20 is only an expression of the profusion of blood which will be shed in this last effort of antichrist. The date of this synchronizes with chapter xix, 17-21; namely, in the time

\* "The full meaning of the promise contained in Lev. xxvi, 5, that is, that 'the threshing should reach unto the vintage, and the vintage unto the sowing-time,' will be apprehended by remembering that in Palestine generally the wheat harvest ordinarily begins the end of May, and the vintage the end of August, while plowing and sowing can rarely be done before November."—*Van Lennep's Bible Lands.*

immediately preceding the millennium, after the fall of mystic Babylon, immediately following the great war or battle of Armageddon. Chap. xvi, 16. These will come to be noticed in their places. The ideas of *harvest* and *reaping*, of a world-wide significance, can apply only to the last times. Matt. xiii, 30.

The general scope and significance of chapter xv may be briefly given. The whole is a prelude to the scene of “the seven last plagues,” or the seven golden vials full of the wrath of God.” The apostle called it a “sign, great and marvelous, for in them is filled up the wrath of God.” Ver. 1. There is nothing to excel the solemn import of these chapters till we reach the final judgment scene. And, we may add, there is nothing to equal the triumphs of this group of epochs till we reach the “new heavens and new earth” beyond the grave.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE VIAL EPOCHS.

First Vial — Second Vial — Third Vial.

It will be remembered that the seven vials embrace the period of the seventh trumpet, which also is the period of “the man of sin,” or antichrist. This period, by the most careful and well attested identifications, extends during twelve hundred and sixty solar years, and finds its date recorded in chapter x. We have already stated that chapters xi to xiv give no consecutive chronological order, but only various and independent glimpses or sporadic lights of the shifting scenes of the periods. But we now return, in chapter xvi, to direct and connected chronology, of which chap. xv is only the prelude and announcement. In chapter xv, 1-4, we have the renewed triumph of the true Church over the “beast,” reaching down from Moses, “the servant of God,” and ending with the victories of the Lamb. Through all the ages, patriarchal, mosaic, and Christian, the true Church is but one, “and all nations shall come and worship before thee [the Lord] for thy judgments are made manifest.” Ver. 4.

After this acknowledgment of the past and hopeful earnest of the future and final results, John “looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.” Ver. 5. The uncovering of the ark of the testimony in the “holy of holies” has in it the force of oath in promise and prophecy that God will fulfill the covenant, and bring his Church triumphantly through the fiery ordeal. The scene of

the open temple is renewed (ver. 8) with increased emphasis: "And the temple was filled with smoke [from the profuse burning of incense, and] from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled;" that is, till the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist shall be fulfilled, and the opening scenes of the millennium shall come, as recorded in chapter xix. Through all these intervening centuries the Church will have sore conflicts with the hostile nations from without, and corrupt elements from within, but through all discouragement "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven will stand open" to remind the suffering Church that the covenant engagement is valid before God, and "no man will be able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels shall be fulfilled."

We now resume the regular connected chronology from where we left it, in chapter ix, 21; and it will carry us on to the millennium, chapter xx, 1-10.

I. *The Opening of the First Vial Epoch* is thus given: John says: "I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image." Chap. xvi, 1-2.

The language of the first vial period describes suffering, but not chiefly from war, or pestilence, or famine. The reference of the symbol seems to be to Exod. ix, 9, 10: And Moses sprinkled it [ashes] "toward heaven, and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast." The "vial" was poured out "upon the earth" (ver. 1, 2), and if we take the word

earth symbolically to signify people not in covenant with God—pagans, or those who have cast off the true faith—and are in bodily and mental distress and perplexity, we shall approach the sense intended by the symbol. “Painful and noisome distempers of the body are very proper emblems of an afflictive condition of life.”\*

Observe, this “noisome and grievous sore” fell only “upon the men which had the mark of *the beast*, and upon *them which worshiped his image*.” The seat of the suffering is personal, in the moral consciousness; not a wound, but, like an ulcerous humor, painful and repulsive. In finding the prototype of such figures we must keep close to the moral limitations of the symbols. The cause of suffering is here limited to a given class of worshipers. Here, within the pale of the Christian Church, the “beast”—the supreme authority over the Church—had brought into the Church, and within the solemnities and purity of the true worship, all the badges of essential heathen idolatry. The reader will remember that the Christian Church is now apostate, and the pope takes the prophetic title of *beast* (literally, *wild beast*), harlot, Babylon.

We find no condition of this society at this date answerable to these requisites, except the absorbing controversy as to the use of images in religious faith and worship; the Greek Church opposing, and the Latin, or Romish Church, sustaining. “The use, and even the worship, of images was firmly established before the end of the sixth century,”† and was firmly inwrought upon the superstition of the times.

To the eye of the more enlightened observer these images of Christ and the apostles, the Virgin Mary and saints, bore all the marks of heathen idolatry; and

\* Lowman.

† Gibbon.

this title and scandal were literally awarded by the Jews and Mohammedans throughout the Christian world. It is not our province or purpose to enter into a full statement of the history of these times, which every reader of Church history understands; but it is sufficient to say that the magnitude of the subject, in its influence on the welfare of the Church, is such as to justify its place in the page of prophecy, and fully justify the position here assigned.

The worship of images had insensibly crept into the Church from an early date, ostensibly as helping devotion and giving reality to things not seen; and in this light it had been tolerated, and had gained great favor and influence, especially over those who were still under the power of heathen superstition. The first open and determined attack upon the image-worship was in the early part of the eighth century. In Constantinople and the East, in 754, the emperor Leo III, backed by the decision of a synodical council of three hundred and thirty-eight bishops, ordered that the images be demolished. In Rome and the West the pope counter-acted the imperial edict, and ordered that the images be retained and honored. This brought both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, East and West, in direct collision. War ensued, and political complications brought the pope as a suppliant at the feet of Pepin, King of France, for help, who, in the result, vanquished his enemies, and put the pope not only in command of the question of images and their worship, but in possession of the "patrimony of St. Peter" also. Meanwhile the pope excommunicated the emperor, and dissolved the allegiance of his subjects. The result was, however, that the pope triumphed, and the political and ecclesiastical power of the emperor in Italy and the West was irrecoverably lost.

The controversy on images, however, was not so easily settled. The Churches were not satisfied, and though in Italy and the West they were hushed by authority in favor of retaining images, in Constantinople and the East the diseased body was long divided, agitated, and perplexed, "as with a noisome and grievous sore;" and the worship of images became "a mark of the beast." "The sect of the Iconoclasts was supported by the zeal and despotism of six emperors, and the East and West were involved in a noisy conflict of one hundred and twenty years,"\* dating at the beginning of the eighth century. During all those years of agitation the highest authorities, civil and ecclesiastical, were called into the controversy, and every artifice and argument employed, on the one hand to sustain, and on the other to defeat, the use of images in worship.

But the question was not to be determined by argument, but by power. In the year A. D. 780 the empress Irene called a synod, afterward declared to be a general council, to establish the worship of images. The council met at Nice. "They unanimously pronounced that the worship of images is agreeable to Scripture and reason," and ratified the act by "acclamations and subscriptions." Still the disuse of images in worship was secretly practiced. The final establishment of the use of images was completed by the empress Theodora in 842. The moral effect of this controversy and its final triumph in favor of images had the effect to plunge the people into a deeper and more real idolatry.

II. *We have now come to consider the Second Vial Epoch, which is so similar to the Third Vial in its symbolism that we shall group them together.*

The inspired apostle thus gives the second and third

\* Gibbon.

vials: "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood." Rev. xvi, 3, 4.

The symbolism of the two vials would authorize this distinction, namely, that the former pours out his vial upon the masses of the uncovenanted people, and the latter upon the whole body of the officiary, as having the burden and responsibility of government directly in hand. It will be noticed that both vials were emptied upon the waters, both became blood, and that in both we must understand the profuse shedding of blood by wars, or civil feuds, or bloody persecutions. In the second vial the contents were poured out upon the "sea." *Sea*, as we have already observed, symbolically denotes multitude, especially multitudes in a state of hostility to God. These God will overthrow in his wrath. Thus (Rev. xiii, 1), "I saw a beast rise out of the sea;" that is, a war-king rising out of the agitations of the people: similar to Psa. lxxv, 7, "Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people." Jer. li, 42, "The sea is come up over Babylon"—Babylon deluged by a conquering army.

As to the third vial, the angel "poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of water." *Rivers*, in symbolic language, often takes the sense of emissary or tributary power, power which supplies and supports the supreme authority of government, "provincial government," influent, not final. "These may, according to exact analogy, be called rivers, because both themselves and their acts have recourse to the main sea, or fountain-head of government—the

amplitude of that jurisdiction to which they belong.”\*

It is further evident, from the language of the avenging angels, that bloody wars are the characteristic traits of these vial epochs. And thus they pronounce the justice of God: “Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.” Vers. 5-7.

If words have any meaning the language of these vials, taken in connection with the corroborative chant and refrain (vers. 5-7), denotes avenging justice upon the bloody persecutors of the Church of Christ. We must, therefore, in looking for that state of society and government which answers to the language of the prophecy, look for sufferings and cruelty and persecution to the Church such as the world had never seen, and, if we read prophecy correctly, never will see again.

It is necessary to fix the proper date of these two epochs—the second and the third—in order to determine the true events upon which the prophet had fixed his eye, and by which we should explain the symbols. The first vial epoch (chap. xvi, 1, 2,) dates at the beginning of the period of antichrist, answering to A. D. 756, and terminating at the final establishing of images in worship by the empress Theodora, A. D. 842. At this last date we open the scene of the second and third vials.

\* See Wemyss's *Symbolical Dictionary*, founded on the *Symbolical Dictionary* of Daubuz, with additions from Vitringa, Ewaldus, and others.

Charlemagne, the French emperor, had died in 814, after having reigned forty-five years. He was devoted to the policy and authority of the papacy, and with some strong traits of character and some of vices he rose to the zenith of imperial power and ambition. His extent of dominion by conquest embraced France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Hungary. Fifty-two campaigns are computed to have been served under his banners. Hallam thus speaks of him: "Unsparing of blood, though not constitutionally cruel, and wholly indifferent to the means which his ambition prescribed, he beheaded in one day four thousand Saxons: an act of atrocious butchery, after which his persecuting edicts, pronouncing the pain of death against those who refused baptism, or even who ate flesh during Lent seem scarcely worthy of notice."\*

Anxious to convert the Saxons, Charlemagne sent an army into their country to subdue them to the Catholic faith. He seemed to think that religion could be forced upon them, as if it involved only the observance of given forms and a given creed. "After a number of battles gallantly fought, and many cruelties committed on both sides, the Saxons were totally subjected; but as they were no less tenacious of their religious than of their civil liberty, persecution marched in the train of war and stained with blood the fetters of slavery." As we have said, "four thousand of their principal men, because they refused, on a particular occasion, to give up their celebrated general, Wittikind, were ordered to be massacred--an instance of severity scarcely to be paralleled in the history of mankind, especially if we consider that the Saxons were not the natural subjects of Charles, but an independent people struggling for freedom. He compelled the Saxons, *under pain of death*, to re-

\* Hallam's *Middle Ages*, chap. i, part I.

ceive baptism, condemned to the severest punishments the breakers of Lent, and every-where substituted force for persuasion.”\*

But this cost, these cruelties and sufferings, of which we can give but an inadequate idea, must be duplicated in the successors of Charlemagne. The empire that ambition had reared and devoted to the papacy must be separated and dissolved. It was raised by bloody wars and oppressive imposts; it must fall by the same means. It took forty-six years to rear the structure and seventy-four years to dissolve it. We are now in the shadows of the tenth century—the darkest age the world ever saw—the legitimate outcome of papal domination. “The history of the Roman pontiffs that lived in this [tenth] century,” says the learned Mosheim, “is a history of so many monsters, and not of men, and exhibits a horrible series of the most flagitious and complicated crimes, as all writers, even those of the Romish communion, unanimously confess.” All witnesses attest the bloody tinge of the times. “In the beginning of the tenth century,” says Gibbon, “the family of Charlemagne had almost disappeared; his monarchy was broken into many hostile and independent States; the regal title was assumed by the most ambitious chiefs; their revolt was imitated in a long subordination of anarchy and discord, and the nobles of every province disobeyed their sovereign, oppressed their vassals, and exercised perpetual hostilities against their equals and neighbors. Their private wars, which overturned the fabric of government, fomented the martial spirit of the nation.”† It was only after a brief but terrible war, in which were consumed one hundred thousand Franks, that the empire was finally divided

\* Jones’s *Church History*, p. 260.

† *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. v, p. 372.

between three grandsons, but with no guarantee of peace.

Very lightly have we passed over events of high historic import, but our subject requires only a notice of the current and tendencies of things, and of their influence on the fulfillment of prophecy, leaving the student to pursue the theme at his own freedom.

We are now, in the second and third vial epochs, Rev. xi, 2, 3, finding, as we judge, the most probable events in history denoted by the symbols of prophecy. The "vials" represent periods of time; the "blood" denotes war, the "sea" denotes multitudes of people, and the "rivers and fountains of water" represent subordinate powers. The history of the Waldenses and other kindred witnesses for Christ here demands a notice.

The people called Waldenses, also Vaudois, did not appear publicly till early in the twelfth century, when they withdrew from the papal Church and retired to the villages of the lower Alps to avoid persecution. As they renounced papacy, and considered the pope to be "the man of sin," and an apostate from the true faith, they drew down upon them the severest persecution. As the common reader knows their story, we need only mention some of their sufferings for Christ's sake as they fall into the current of events during the second and third vial epochs.

Inquiry was made into the doctrines of these people, and as they were found to be fundamentally opposite the Romish faith, and their adherents could not be prevailed upon to renounce them, resort was made to the most horrible cruelties in order to force submission, calling out the civil power to execute the vengeance which the priesthood had prescribed. They died like true martyrs. "Multitudes, however, fled like innocent

and defenseless sheep from these devouring wolves. They crossed the Alps and traveled in every direction. Providence and the prospect of safety conducted them into Germany, England, France, Italy, and other countries. They every-where drew attention, and their doctrine formed increasing circles around them. The storm which threatened their destruction only scattered them as the precious seeds of the future glorious reformation of the Christian Church.”\* Among others who labored was Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons, who came forward and preached with great power and success in various parts of Europe. But persecution followed. “In Alsace and along the Rhine the doctrines of Waldo spread extensively. Persecution ensued. Thirty-five citizens of Mentz were burned in one fire, at the city of Bengen, and eighteen at Mentz itself. The bishops of both Mentz and Strasburg breathed nothing but vengeance and slaughter against them. At the latter city, where Waldo himself narrowly escaped apprehension, eighty persons were committed to the flames.”†

In order to make the search, detection, and punishment of heretics effectual, laws were framed the most rigid, inhuman, and bloody which were ever known in barbarian or savage life. “The statutes of the Council of Toulouse [A. D. 1229], in order absolutely to extirpate every lingering vestige of heresy, formed the code of persecution, which not merely aimed at suppressing all public teaching, but the more secluded and secret freedom of thought. It was a system which penetrated into the most intimate sanctuary of domestic life; and made devotion not merely a merit and a duty, but an obligation also, enforced by tremendous penalties.

“The archbishops, bishops, and exempt abbots were to appoint in every parish one priest, and three or more

\* Jones. † *Ibid.*

lay inquisitors to search all houses and buildings, in order to detect heresies, and to denounce them to the archbishop or bishop, the lord or his bailiff, so as to insure their apprehension. The lords were to make the same inquisition in every part of their estates. Whoever was convicted of harboring a heretic forfeited the land to his lord, and was reduced to personal slavery. If he was guilty of such concealment from negligence, not from intention, he received proportionate punishment. Every house in which a heretic was found was to be razed to the ground, the farm confiscated. The bailiff who should not be active in detecting heresies was to lose his office and be incapacitated from holding in future. Heretics, however, were not to be judged but by the bishop or some ecclesiastical person. Any one might seize a heretic on the lands of another. Heretics who recanted were to remove from their homes, and settle in Catholic cities; to wear two crosses of a different color from their dress, one on the right side, one on the left. They were incapable of any public function unless by the pope or by his legate. Those who recanted from fear of death were to be immured forever. All persons, males of the age of fourteen, females of twelve, were to take an oath of abjuration of heresy, and of their Catholic faith; if absant, and not appearing within fifteen days, they were held suspected of heresy. All persons were to confess and communicate three times a year, or were, in like manner, under suspicion of heresy. No layman was permitted to have any book of the Old or New Testament, especially in a translation, unless, perhaps, the Psalter, with a breviary, or the Hours of the Virgin. No one suspected of heresy could practice as a physician. Care was to be taken that no heretic had access to sick or dying persons. All wills were to be made in the pres-

ence of a priest. No office of trust was to be held by one in evil fame as a heretic. Those were in evil fame who were so by common report, or so declared by good and grave witnesses before the bishop.”\*

Similar laws were enacted at different times. Dominic had constituted the Inquisition, and urged it on with most inhuman zeal. About A. D. 1215 persecution raged with great violence. For fifty years men acted with infuriated zeal to exterminate what the popes would call heresy, that is, opposition to their own ambitious policy. The methods for detecting and punishing those who were called heretics surpasses all conception in criminal law. “In the united kingdoms of Castile and Aragon there were *eighteen different inquisitorial courts*, having each of them its counselors, termed apostolical inquisitors; its secretaries, sergeants, and other officers; and besides these there were *twenty thousand familiars* dispersed throughout the kingdom, who acted as spies and informers, and were employed to apprehend all suspected persons, and commit them for trial to the prisons which belonged to the Inquisition. By these familiars, persons were seized on bare suspicion, and in contradiction to the established rules of equity they were put to the torture, tried, and condemned by the inquisitors, without being confronted either with their accusers or with the witnesses on whose evidence they were condemned. The punishments inflicted were more or less dreadful, according to the caprice and humor of the judges. The unhappy victims were either strangled or committed to the flames, or loaded with chains and shut up in dungeons during life—their effects confiscated, and their families stigmatized with infamy. Authors of undoubted credit affirm, and without the least exaggeration, that

\* Milman’s *Latin Christianity*, vol. v, pp. 225-227.

*millions of persons* have been ruined by this terrible court. In Spain Moors were banished a million at a time. Six or eight hundred thousand Jews were driven away at once, and their immense riches seized by their accusers. Heretics of all ranks and of different denominations were imprisoned and burned, or fled into other countries.”\*

The armies employed by Pope Innocent III. destroyed above two hundred thousand of the Waldenses in the space of five months. Another army of more than one hundred thousand attacked the Albigenses, took one of the cities, filled the streets with slaughter and blood, and committed many to the flames. In another place one of the cities of the Earl of Beziers was besieged, and twenty-three thousand were indiscriminately massacred. The invading army was soon increased to three hundred thousand; and they now besieged the capital. But the besieged at last escaped through a subterranean passage, leading to the more inaccessible part of the mountain. The Earl of Montfort and the pope’s legate at another time (A. D. 1239) commanded that one hundred and eighty men and women be committed to be burned, “and they were all burned at the same time, in the same flames, in the presence of eighteen bishops. ‘It is a holocaust agreeable to God,’ exclaimed a monk who witnessed the execution. Was it to be expected that a woman and a child should rise up against an ecclesiastic practice which was sanctioned by the concurrent zeal of monks, of prelates, of popes, and of councils?”† These scenes of slaughter and devastation had been carried on against the Albigenses, in the southern provinces of France, for more than twenty years, during the former part of the thirteenth century, when by careful computation it was

\* Jones.

† Waddington’s *Church History*, p. 359.

ascertained that *a million persons bearing that name were put to death*. This occasioned many to cross the Pyrenees and seek shelter in Spain and other countries.

“We may observe that the persecuting power of popery was fully established, and raged with greatest fury during this period of time (A. D. 1200). It was in this day they were most eminently distinguished for shedding the blood of saints and prophets.”

The Albigenses became numerous and powerful; they were spread through Languedoc, Dauphine, Provence, and Aragon; they were protected by persons in power, in particular by Raymond, Count of Toulouse. Pope Innocent III. sent his legates to suppress them about A. D. 1198. He gave them commission not only to preach against the Albigenses, but to excite princes and people to exterminate them by a crusade, in which he endeavored to engage Philip Augustus, then king of France, and the great princes and lords of his kingdom.”\* In this he also engaged Father Dominic, of notorious inquisitorial fame, who pledged himself to carry out the plans of the pope.

Frederick II. of Germany died about A. D. 1250. He was a monster in his treatment of the so-called heretics, and published four edicts against them in 1224. In his fourth edict he is thus disposed to speak: “We condemn to perpetual infamy, withdraw our protection from, and put under ban the Puritans, Patarenes, Leonists, Arnoldists, Passignes, Josephines, Albigenses, Waldenses, etc., and all other heretics of both sexes, and of whatsoever name; and ordain that their goods may be so confiscated as that their children may never inherit them, seeing it is much more heinous to offend the eternal than the temporal majesty.” It then proceeds to condemn *all suspected persons* as heretics, if they do not purge

\* Lowman.

themselves within a year, commands the officials to exterminate heretics from all places subject to them, orders that the land of the barons shall be seized by the Catholics, if they do not purge them from heretics within a year after proper admonition, and ordains various punishments against all the favorers of heretics, thus closing the dreadful catalogue: "Furthermore, we put under our ban those who believe, receive, defend, and favor heretics; ordaining that if any person shall refuse to give satisfaction within a year after his communication, he shall be *ipso jure* infamous, and not admitted to any kind of public office—let him be *intestable*, and let him not have the power of making a will, nor of receiving any thing by succession or inheritance. Moreover, let no one answer for him in any affair, but let him be obliged to answer others. If he should be a judge, let his sentence be of no effect, nor any causes be heard before him. If an advocate, let him never be admitted to plead in any one's defense. If a notary, let no instruments made by him be valid. We add, that a heretic may be a heretic, and that the houses of the Patarenes, their abettors, and favorers, either where they have taught, or where they have laid hands on others, shall be destroyed, never to be rebuilt." Dated at Padua, Feb. 22, 1229.\*

Nothing could be more infamous and cruel than these edicts, issued under imperial authority in the name and pretense of justice and religion. We quote it here as showing the hopelessness of the cause of the Waldenses and their suffering compeers in any possible appeal to human justice. The ruling power in every kingdom of Europe stood ready to execute the sentence of death and torture upon all, without respect to age or sex, upon whom the suspicion of heresy was

\* Jones's *Church History*, p. 363.

fixed, by pope, or bishop, or inquisition. The extent and horrible results of the persecutions we have not space or disposition to mention, but enough has been said to determine, beyond a possibility of doubt, the powerful *animus* of the Roman hierarchy—the “man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. . . . Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” 2 Thess. ii, 3, 4, 8.

One more allusion to the distress of these times which we consider to fall within the time of the third vial, and to be indicated by its symbols, may be here given. We refer to the “crusades,” especially the first three. From the early history of the Church, after the first century, especially after the fourth century, when Constantine had professed the Christian faith, it became a growing custom for the Christians to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem and other places made sacred by the miracles of Christ, and to take and bear away something as a sacred memorial of the visit. The Christian and Mohammedan alike considered the act and the sacred relic to have a virtue favorable to their future state. This custom had become greatly enlarged after the conquest of Jerusalem by the Saracens, A. D. 637, and had been a source of great gain by the followers of Mohammed.

To rescue Jerusalem from the hands of the so-called “infidels,” and place the holy city under Christian control, was the ostensible object and design of the crusaders. Never was Europe so profoundly agitated, religiously, as by the proposition to rescue the holy place from this desecration and place it in Christian

hands. The enthusiasm soon reached the ultimate limit of fanaticism. The crowned heads generally favored the enterprise, but were careful not to adventure in person. Men and women who had no conception of the dangers and difficulties involved clamored by thousands—sixty thousand at one time—to be led forward. Peter the Hermit preached every-where. The people were wild with excitement. Two synods indorsed and urged on the day of departure. The pope saw, and stimulated the enterprise by personal address, and by liberal indulgences, and the promise of reward in this life and that which is to come. Enlistment here secures eternal life hereafter.

Seven crusades in all covered two hundred years; the first three fall within about one hundred years, bringing the prophetic termini of the first three vial epochs down to about A. D. 1189. We have already stated that war and bloodshed characterized these epochs. Their general title is that of “vials full of the seven last plagues;” “vials of the wrath of God.” In the epistle of the vision the angel of the waters said, “Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . for they have shed the blood of saints, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.”

The question then is, whether the history of the times justifies the symbolism of the propheey? This can be ascertained only by results—judged of only by facts and figures.

Waddington has put the figures too low when he says, “the loss of Christian life occasioned by the crusades is fairly calculated at more than two million.”\* Three hundred thousand of the first crusade are reported to have perished before a single city was rescued from the infidels. The first crusade started out with

\* *History of the Church*, p. 372.

three hundred and sixty thousand foot and sixty thousand horse, with an indefinite host of pilgrims. Jerusalem was taken from the Saracens and a Latin kingdom established by Godfrey Bouillon, and Jerusalem and its sacred places placed in the hands of the Christians. In a military sense the expedition so far might be considered triumphant. But the cost in human flesh and blood "is calculated with probability at about twelve hundred thousand."\*

After forty-eight years from the date of the taking of Jerusalem, a second crusade was fitted out for the support of the Christian power which now held the dominion of Jerusalem with a feeble tenure. The armament created was imposing and immense, and from the character of its leaders the greatest hopes of victory were entertained. It was like Europe against Asia.

Four hundred thousand foot and one hundred and forty thousand horse would seem to give adequate assurance of supporting the fallen fortunes of the Christian cause in Palestine. In addition to the military array about six hundred thousand persons, male and female, are computed to be attached to the expedition as pilgrims. As Peter the Hermit was foremost in rousing the fanatical passion of Europe in the first crusade, so now the same spirit animated St. Bernard.

"The history of religious war has not recorded any expedition at the same time more fatal and more fruitless than the crusade of St. Bernard. After two or three years of suffering and disaster almost uninterrupted, a miserable remnant of survivors returned to relate their misfortunes and marvel at their discomfiture. A general outcry was raised against the author of these calamities; innumerable widows and orphans demanded of the prophet their husbands and their sires;

\* Waddington, Part IV, Chap. xxi, sec. 4.

or at least they claimed the sacred laurels which he had promised, the triumphs which he had vouchsafed in his dispensation of the boons of heaven to the soldiers of the cross.”\* But the suffering widows could gain no pity, no redress. “The crime of St. Bernard, the most enlightened prelate of his time, who usurped the attributes and forged the seal of God in order to launch some hundreds of thousands of confiding Christians into probable destruction, or at least into successful massacre, excites a serious indignation which it would be partial to suppress, and which neither his talents nor his virtues nor his piety nor the vicious principles of his age are sufficient to remove.”†

The third crusade, the last one we shall mention, dates A. D. 1187, commanded by Frederick I. of Germany. His armament consisted of one hundred thousand foot, sixty thousand horse, fifteen thousand knights, and an equal number of squires, “the flower of the German chivalry.”

We have so far lifted the veil of history upon the European west and the Asiatic east as to fully meet the demands of our argument in unfolding the symbolism of prophecy. We stand amazed at the purposes of God in suffering the barbarians of the north to descend upon Europe with their millions, deluging society and government, language and civilization, in one undistinguishing mass of ruins; in suffering the Saracens, and afterward the Turks, to do to Western Asia and Northern Africa what the barbarians did to Europe; and now to suffer, for two hundred years, to keep society and civilization at a poise, unable to advance, developing under the pretense of piety and the will of God a type of fanaticism which is in no wise superior to that of the northern barbarians or the Mohammedans. The

\* Waddington, Part IV, Chap. xxi, sec. 4.

† *Ibid.*

watchword of the papists was, "It is the will of God," and hereby takes the will or seal of God to sanction the most atrocious acts of cruelty, brutality, and lust that the world has ever witnessed. It must be borne in mind that we have not attempted to notice all the wars which have occurred within the times and nations mentioned, but so much only as sufficed to meet the demands of our argument. If a million of men have fallen in battle, or in consequence of war, the distress is duplicated by the effects of war upon families, upon general society and government, upon civilization and the industrial arts. When these considerations are despised men and nations must learn the bitterness of transgression by the fruits of experience. God has no other method. "Among the many evil consequences of the crusades we may account this perhaps as the worst—that they put arms into the hands of intolerance, and finally kindled in the bosom of Europe the same fanatical passions with which they had desolated the East."\*

"The crusades, if we could calculate the incalculable waste of human life from first to last (a waste without achieving any enduring result), and all the human misery which is implied in that loss of life, may seem the most wonderful frenzy which ever possessed mankind. But from a less ideal point of view—a view of human affairs as they have actually evolved under the laws or guidance of divine Providence—considerations suggest themselves which mitigate or altogether avert this contemptuous or condemnatory sentence. If Christianity, which was to mold and fuse the barbarous nations into one great European society—if Latin Christianity and the political system of the West were to be one in limits and extent, it was compelled to assume this less

\* Waddington, Part IV, 'Chap. xxi, sec. 4.

spiritual, more materialistic form. Reverence for holy places—that intense passion which first showed itself in pilgrimages, afterward in the crusade—was an inseparable part of what has been called mediæval Christianity. Nor was this age less inevitably an age of war—an age in which human life, even if it had not been thrown away on so vast a scale on one object, would hardly have escaped other destruction. . . . Few minds were, perhaps, far-seeing enough to contemplate the crusades as they have been viewed by modern history: as a blow struck at the heart of the Mohammedan power; as a political diversion of the tide of war from the frontiers of the European kingdoms to Asia.” \*

But however imperfect may be our vision into the unrevealed future, we have prophetic intimations of the outline of the divine procedure with those who use and those who abuse the civil governments of this world. This will come to be noticed in the sixth vial epoch.

We follow the crusades under this (third) vial only to about A. D. 1189.

\* Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. iv, p. 33.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE VIAL EPOCHS.—CONTINUED.

## Fourth Vial.

*The Fourth Vial Epoch* is thus announced: “And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.” Rev. xvi, 8, 9.

“The sun is put, in sacred prophecy, for the whole species and race of kings in the kingdom, or kingdoms, of the world politic, shining with regal power and glory. Darkening, smiting, or setting of the sun is put for the ceasing of a kingdom, or for the desolation thereof, proportional to the darkness and the scorching heat of the sun, for vexatious wars, persecutions, and troubles inflicted by the king.”\* Such a construction is given to the same symbol in Isa. xxiv, 6. “Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate. *Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned and few men left.*” The same figure is found, Matt. xiii, 5, 6, 21. The seed that fell on stony ground, “*When the sun was up was scorched, and because it had no root, withered away.*” It makes no difference whether the desolation is literally caused by the sun or some other agency, it is sufficient to know

\*Sir Isaac Newton on Daniel, Book II, p. 17. Quoted by Lowman on Rev. xvi, 8.

that the inevitable doom of blight, or smiting, is upon the antichristian nations; still as the literal sun appears to be the dispenser of organic life and light, so the withdrawal or increase of these are naturally followed by the more universal and effective ruin. “We may understand this ‘scorching men with fire so that they were scorched with great heat,’ as a prediction that the judgments of God should reach his enemies in every place [and from every direction]; for the host of heaven and seasons of the year should fight against them, and smite them with destruction, so that they should find no room to escape.”\*

It must be kept in mind, as we have already stated, that we are compelled to keep within the standing imagery and limitations of the prophet; namely, the facts which favor and those which oppose the kingdom of Christ; giving, not a full history, but so much only as would justify the true import of the sacred text.

It is to be specially noticed that in the text the word translated “*scorched*” does not denote immediate death as the characteristic of the epoch, but *distress, vexation, perplexity*, and, without repentance, with ultimate death. This is so stated in the text, where the final result of their trouble is charged to be that “they blasphemed the name of God, and they repented not to give God glory.” A process of perplexing reformatory judgments preceded terrible executions. Gibbon says, “If the ninth and tenth centuries were the times of darkness, the thirteenth and fourteenth were the ages of absurdity and fable.” Nothing is gained to the unrepenting nations by experience of the past. “They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth [of their

\* Sir Isaac Newton on Daniel, Book II, p. 17. Quoted by Lowman on Rev. xvi, 8.

government] are out of course." Psa. lxxxii, 5. It is a marked feature of the centuries now under consideration that the popes and the supreme civil authorities are perplexed—we may say distressed—to know how to dispose of the dissenting, non-conforming portions of the people. On the one hand they are persecuted with unrelenting cruelty; on the other hand the witnessing Church is increasing with alarming rapidity; on the one hand the civil rulers are not agreed in sentiment as to the moral justice of such persecutions; on the other hand if they refuse to execute those who are condemned of heresy the pope has power to dissolve allegiance to his lord or king, and not a crowned head in Europe would dare to force obedience. These were "scorching" conditions.

We have already noticed the first three crusades, and we now finish our further and final reference to the last four. The time extending over these four crusades is about sixty-seven years, from A. D. 1203 to 1270. The recital of the bloody scenes of this period may be briefly stated, as it offers little to instruct or entertain.

The fourth crusade was fitted out in the year 1202, under Baldwin, Count of Flanders, consisting of about forty thousand men. The object of this crusade was different from all others, in that, instead of a religious war, they proposed to capture Constantinople and end the empire of the East. This they did. Constantinople was taken for the first time, and sacked and plundered by the Christians. This was in accord with the policy of the pope, as then he would become the head of the Eastern Church, as he was already of the Western. But the victory was of short duration. The Grecian cities allied with the Turks and dethroned the new emperor Baldwin, putting him to a most cruel death. Of all the numbers who engaged in this expedition few

found their way into the Holy Land, and nothing was gained in the war against the infidels.

Disastrous and abortive as were the previous crusades, the zeal for another, the fifth expedition, was unabated. Accordingly, another army of two hundred thousand "excellent troops" was raised, and its force directed to Egypt, intending to approach Jerusalem by the way of Egypt, the great granary of the East. But this purpose also was defeated, the army being deluged by the overflow of the Nile, into which it was treacherously led, on the one side, while its ships and transports were burned on the other. In this condition of things the crusaders sought and obtained a cessation of arms by treaty which recognized the total failure of the expedition.

Louis IX. of France raised the last two crusades. The Christian cause in the East was almost extinct. A few places on the sea-coast of Palestine remained, held by a feeble tenure. "Their affairs were, on the whole, in a most wretched situation."\* Four years were employed in preparation of the expedition, and sixty thousand men were received as an enforcement of his army. But half of his immense army perished by sickness, and the other half was defeated in battle and taken prisoners. Louis himself was among the prisoners; but by a princely ransom he was liberated, and he returned to his kingdom. Here ends the sixth crusade.

At the end of thirteen years Louis is again seized with a strange frenzy to lead out another crusade. The pope, as usual, encouraged the enterprise. The object was the conversion to Christianity of the Moors, and their method was to seize the dominions of the king of Tunis, and so make the conversion to Christianity of that prince and his people the condition of peace.

\* Tytler.

Such had been the policy of Charlemagne with the Saxons. But instead of subduing the Moors the Christians themselves were besieged in their camp by the Moors, and the unfortunate Louis, after losing one of his sons by the plague, fell a victim himself to the same distemper.”\* The farce was now ended. The rage of crusades was over. “Some few of the Christian troops who survived that mortal contagion were brought back to Europe. In those two unfortunate expeditions of Louis IX. it is computed that there perished one hundred thousand men.” The sum total of lives thrown away upon these impracticable, absurd, and most irreligious crusades has been commonly computed at two millions. And if we would approach the probable aggregate of mortality and misery which was induced by other wars, such as the extension of Eastern provinces conquered by Saladin; the invasion of the East by the savage Carizmians; the endless and bitter quarrels and civil wars of the Christian nations East and West, often more savage than foreign war; when to these and such like we add the miseries of domestic homes, made desolate by poverty, want, and widowhood—we say, when all things are considered, we might add another million to the list of mortality. Consider also that these crusades were the secret policy of the papacy for extending papal authority.

We are still in the fourth vial epoch, and we open the page of Christian martyrology. In the beginning of the thirteenth century it becomes publicly known that great numbers of Waldenses and Albigenses are in the country of Toulouse, France, and vast provisions are made to quell their growth and exterminate their existence. During the first thirty years of this century it is computed that *a million of persons* were put to

\* Tytler.

death as heretics. In 1232 the Inquisition was brought into Aragon, "and for the space of a century and a half measures of the greatest rigor were incessantly carried on against the Waldenses in that quarter before their entire extinction could be effected."\*

During the period of which we now speak the Netherlands † exhibited many shocking scenes of slaughter. In the year 1236 more than fifty of the Waldenses were either burned or buried alive.

In the year 1210 twenty-four persons were apprehended in the city of Paris, some of whom were cast into prison, and others committed to the flames.

In Montreal, near Carcassone, a proposition was made between the Waldenses and the papists to publicly discuss their differences of doctrine, and umpires should determine the result. But in the midst of the debate the pope's legate announced that "*the army of the crusaders was at hand.*" The pope's army came to decide upon the doctrine, not by argument, but by fire and fagot. "The armies employed by Pope Innocent III. destroyed above two hundred thousand of them in the short space of a few months." The proposed controversy just mentioned proved a decoy to entrap the Waldenses. It proved so, says Jones, "if we may place any reliance upon writers of unimpeachable veracity."

"About 1232 a synod was convened at Tarragona, when many severe decrees were passed against heretics, and for the space of a century and a half measures of the greatest rigor were incessantly carried on against the Waldenses in that quarter before their entire extinction could be effected."‡

The Waldenses continued to increase throughout Germany, despite obstacles, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Four hundred and forty-three

\* Jones.

† Flanders.

‡ Jones.

were apprehended by the inquisitors in Saxony and Pomeroy in the year 1391, who confessed that their teachers came from Bohemia, and that they and their ancestors before them had been instructed in the principles they now held.

In 1457 a great number of the Waldenses were discovered by the inquisitors in the diocese of Eistein, in Germany, who were put to death, and who confessed that they had among them twelve barbes, or pastors, who labored in the work of the ministry. In short, Trithemius relates it as an acknowledged fact that in those days the Waldenses were so numerous that in traveling from Cologne to Milan, the whole extent of Germany, they could lodge every night with persons of their own profession, and that it was a custom among them to affix certain private marks to their signs and gates, whereby they made themselves known to one another.

“In the year 1334 the monks of the Inquisition who were deputed to search after the Waldenses apprehended one hundred and fourteen of them at Paris, who were burned alive. It is also related by the author of a work entitled, *The Sea of Mysteries*, that in the year 1378, the persecution against the Waldenses continuing, a vast number of them were burned in the ‘Place de Grave,’ in Paris. Two years after this, namely, in 1380, we find Francis Borelli, an inquisitorial monk, armed with a bull of Pope Clement VII., undertaking the persecution of the Waldenses in the same quarter. In the space of thirteen years he delivered into the hands of the civil magistrates of Grenoble one hundred and fifty persons to be burned as heretics; and in the valley of Fraissiniere he apprehended eighty more, who were also committed to the flames.”\*

\* Jones.

It will appear to the attentive reader that, in the earlier struggles of the Waldenses and Albigenses to escape from the merciless grasp of the popes and their myrmidons, they fled to the adjacent regions of France and Spain. But in later times they migrated northward and eastward, in Germany and Austria, and they re-appear in the provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, Poland, and partially in England. Wherever they went they sowed the seed of gospel truth, and thousands were converted to the true faith. The popes and their supporters wondered how it could be that the more these suffering churches were persecuted the more they increased. But banishment into new countries only widened the sphere of gospel labor, and sowing the gospel seed. As it was in early apostolic times, "they that were scattered abroad [by persecution] went every-where preaching the word." Acts viii, 4.

Then, also, from time to time the Lord raised up men of special gifts to preach and teach. These boldly proclaimed the truth, and fearlessly rebuked and exposed the crimes and vices of the monks and clergy, the rulers and common people. Among the noted gifts were those of Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons, who left all to preach Jesus, and used his vast wealth in the varied demands of his calling. He died in Bohemia in 1170. Robert Greathood, Bishop of Lincoln, England, a learned and godly man—died 1253. John Ziska was from a noble family, renowned for his wisdom, courage, love of country, and the fear of God. He identified himself fully, and with great usefulness, to the doctrines of civil and religious liberty. He died in 1424.

John Wyclif, of England was born in 1324, and died December 28, 1384. He was famous for his learning, his piety, his fearless attacks upon the vice and corruptions of the Roman Catholic Church, and for his English

translation of the Bible.\* He is reputed and styled the morning star of the Lutheran reformation.

Not long after the death of Wiclf there appeared upon the scene John Huss, and closely upon him Jerome of Prague, an intimate friend and companion of Huss. As reformers the two latter did not go quite as far into the Romish corruptions as the Waldenses did, but their doctrines were fundamental, and longer time for development would have made the dissent from Rome more complete. Both Huss and Jerome were model reformers. Learned, pious, unselfish, devoted to true spiritual religion and thorough reform in the Romish Church, they met the dangers of their commission without fear, and its stern morals without compromise. In the full tide of their labors and success our heroes were arrested, and by orders of the Council of Constance, then in session, were condemned to be burned alive. Huss was executed July 7, 1415, and Jerome May 20, 1416. Nicholas of Basle was a man of great influence, but was burned at the stake in Vienna. John Tauler, born in Strasburg 1290, died 1361. Many leading men stood forth in these perilous times, inspiring the masses of inquirers with courage and fidelity. Since the end of the thirteenth century Germany, especially in the south, had been subject to religious commotions. Men were agitated to know what was the true religion. In 1340 one, a layman, professing to have found the light, came one hundred and twenty miles to Strasburg, to consult Tauler on the subject. The interview was searching, and the layman instructed the humble university doctor in the inner life, thus proving a great blessing in his gospel labors. The people were burdened with forms and penances, but found no rest or spiritual light.

A new society was formed, denominated "The Friends

\* See Townley's *Biblical Literature*, vol. i, p. 448.

of God," the title being grounded in the words of Christ, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." John xv, 14. This was not so much a distinct sect as an effort to attain the spiritual development of forms and doctrines and churchly impositions. It was a reaching out and inwardly to find something higher and better than the bare externality of Romish churchly forms. It did not attack the hierarchy, but conforming to it passed over to the question, Is there not a spiritual, life-imparting principle in which the soul finds rest?

Many sought and found rest. Others went on beyond the limit and warrant of Holy Scripture, and fell in "wandering mazes lost" in mysticism and scholasticism.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE VIAL EPOCHS.—CONTINUED.

## The Fifth Vial.

I. *The Fifth Vial Epoch is thus given*: “And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.” Rev. xvi, 10–11.

The literal rendering is better, thus: “And he poured out his vial upon the *throne* of the *wild beast*.” “*Throne*” ( $\thetaρόνος$ ) is symbolic of supreme authority, or the place where it is dispensed. The word *beast*, as a translation of  $\thetaηρίον$ , *therion*, does not meet either the force of the word or that of the connection. An animal may be a beast, and still be harmless and useful; but a *wild beast*, or a *savage beast*, as it commonly signifies, could alone meet the sense here. It occurs thirty-eight times in the Apocalypse, always in a bad sense—as of a ferocious beast. There is not in Scripture a symbol whose import is better defined than this of the apocalyptic beast. Let any English reader take his concordance and turn to the word *beast*,\* and mark

\* The reader will understand that in seventeen places (namely, Rev. iv, 6–9; v, 6, 8, 11, 14; vi, 1, 3, 5–7; vii, 11; xiv, 3; xv, 7; xix, 4;) the word translated “beast” in our English Bible is a totally different word from that which we are now considering. The one, as we have already stated, signifies “*wild beast*,”  $\thetaηρίον$ , and is to be a terror to the Church and the Christian world for twelve hundred and sixty years; the other signifies a “*living creature*,  $\xiων$ , and is

what the Bible says of this creature, and he will perceive at once it is evil, and only evil, filling the sphere of prophetic vision with deeds of carnage and corruption. In chapter xvii, 12, 13, 16, this personage is identified; also, in her various appellations of "harlot," "Babylon the Great, mother of harlots," her bloody persecutions of the saints, and her fearful and final downfall. Chaps. xvii and xviii. In all these the identity of this "mystery of iniquity" is clearly seen, "as face answers to face in a glass." We shall not, therefore, enlarge upon the arguments at this time which the Protestant world admits and the inspired apostle takes such care to bring within the scope of our understanding, but shall at once apply the symbolic "wild beasts" of the fifth vial to the *Romish hierarchy*, represented in the person of the pope in his blasphemous assumptions and usurpations.

The act of "pouring out the vial *upon the seat of the beast*" is, therefore, a symbolic act, signifying that the judgments of the fifth vial epoch are to be concentrated upon the *beast*, or hierachal system and functionaries of the Romish Church, and also whether any adequate evidence of such wrathful dispensation appears upon the page of history within the assigned limits of the epoch. It will be seen that the symbolism of the vision does not call for war, though that is involved, but it describes great confusion and agony of the beast. The kingdom of the "beast" was "full of darkness." "As light is the symbol of joy and gladness, so, on the contrary, *darkness* is the symbol of misery and adver-

always associated with the throne of God, or the functionaries near the throne. The radical idea of its signification is *live*, or *to live*, and should always be translated *living ones*, or *living creatures*, never *beasts*, as in our English version. See Rev. iv, 6-9; v, 6, 8, 11, 14; xiv, 8; xv, 7; xix, 4, etc.

sity.”\* Isaiah gives the figurative import of darkness in the antithetic verse, chapter lix, 9, 10.

“ We look for light, but behold obscurity ;  
For brightness, but we walk in darkness,  
We grope for the wall like the blind,  
And we grope as if we had no eyes ;  
We stumble at noonday as in the night,  
We are in desolate places as dead men.”

It was not an intellectual obscuration merely, though that would have been a sore distress in a case like this, but a moral one, in which the good and the right are neither sought nor desired, and the wretched victim is left to grapple alone with penal consequences which now must take their course with unerring vengeance. The several items of the text are given with wonderful precision : the kingdom of the beast is “ full of darkness,” “ they gnawed their tongues for pain,” “ they blasphemed the God of heaven,” “ their pains,” “ their sores”—all indicating unwonted anguish of spirit, confusion of mental operations, and great perplexity in the beast and his subalterns.

“ We cannot be surprised at the fact that among the friends of God there were many sectional differences, from a more strict churchly direction, to a tendency bordering on the heretical, or entirely heretical.”†

The profession of these new societies, though in themselves loyal to Church forms and doctrines, and aiming at a higher spiritual standard, could not be tolerated. They could not disguise the fact that their pure and spiritual doctrine stood in open rebuke of the licentious lives of the clergy, and had the effect to call public attention thereto. Many, like Tauler, went to the stake on that issue. It was an age of agitation, both in politics and religion: “ Men’s hearts failing them for

\* Wemyss.      † Neander’s *Church History*, vol. v, p. 389.

fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Luke xxi, 26.

The spirit of deep inquiry as to the true religion or the true worship, and as to the right of all men to believe and openly profess their moral convictions without let or hinderance, under protection of law, was taking fast hold of the common mind. Men began to think and feel in the direction of moral rights and freedom. But in the wide world there was not a government that protected freedom of religious thought and faith; and the ruling religious power in Europe held it not only admissible, but a high moral duty, to inflict torture and death upon all who deviated from the papal rule.

We have now arrived at the opening of the Reformation, in the former part of the fifteenth century, in the presence of Martin Luther, his friends and his enemies; and, although the epoch is stamped with his wonderful individuality, other actors still appeared with gifts suited to the exigencies of the age, to illuminate the page of this eventful world-power which God has given to men. From the results of the fifth vial, in which antichrist is openly met and in his central throne of power broken, never to be regained, the Church of Christ steadfastly looks forward to the completion of the final victory in full millennial glory.

It is impossible for us here to give a full statement of the characteristics of the apocalyptic antichrist. These will be given in their place. But against all Christian principles the Roman pontiff assumes and usurps the supreme power over the consciences of men, determining what is right and enforcing by civil penalties and horrible tortures any deviation therefrom. The individual cannot, under pain of death or torture, accept

any doctrine or worship which the pope pronounces "heresy;" that is, that deviates from the papal standard. Here, then, is the primal issue between the papal and Protestant religion—between Christ and antichrist. First of all, the battle must be fought over the threshold of gospel liberty—"freedom to worship God;" a concession of right to worship God according to one's own conscience, not merely as an act of toleration, which implies the right vested in the sovereign or an ecclesiastic to be delegated to men by government, or of individual discretion, but a right given by the Creator direct to every man; for the use of which he is accountable to God and not to man.

Eight hundred years before Luther's day men protested against the corruptions of the Catholic Church and the horrid cruelties begun against those who preached a purer Gospel. But three hundred years prior to Luther the horrible massacres took on a new type of severity through the Inquisition, and carried things beyond all precedent in the world's history. The popes rioted in blood. No language can describe it; no pity could interfere without incurring the same inevitable doom.

But in all this fearful suffering the persecuted Church, like as those who fled before Saul of Tarsus, "went every-where preaching the word," so that the dispersion only widened the field of gospel labor. Despite all opposition, the truth prevailed.

Then, also, kings and magnates began to dissent. Many began to doubt the rights assumed by the popes, and to withhold co-operation with the Inquisition and its baleful jurisdiction. And it was this very fact that put the popes in such terror and perplexity. The light began to dawn; yea, further, it had in Luther's time already dawned on the Western world, and no power of men or demons could repress its heavenly influent beams.

There was perceptibly forming a public sentiment as a glimmering light of true religion, penetrating through the crevices of the old and effete superstitions, and inviting to a free and liberal Christianity. Satan, however, will rage, “because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” See Rev. xii, 9, 10, 12.\*

Two facts of vast import will suffice to determine our argument as to the place and time of the epoch of the fifth vial. The first is the peace of Westphalia, A. D. 1648. This treaty terminated a thirty years’ religious war, and laid a firm foundation of religious freedom in Germany and other States; “the three religions—Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist—were equally established. The imperial chamber was composed of twenty-four Protestant members, and twenty-six Catholic, and the emperor was obliged to admit six Protestants, even in his aulic council at Vienna. . . . This salutary peace settled all disputes, and fixed the contending religions upon an unalterable basis; and from that time Germany, gradually recovering from her wounds and misfortunes, at length became a great, a powerful, and a polished nation.”† In the treaty itself it is recorded that, “For preventing any disputes that may hereafter arise in the political State, all and every one of the elect-

\* See in chapters vii and viii of this treatise, and its application to this epoch.

† Tyler’s *History*, vol. ii, p. 252.

ors, princes, and States of the Roman Empire ought to be so confirmed by virtue of this treaty, in their ancient rights, *in matters ecclesiastical and political* in their dominions, in their rights of legality, and in the possession of all these together, that no person may have it in his power to give them actual molestation on any pretense whatever. *They shall, without any contradiction, enjoy the privilege of suffrage in all deliberations concerning the right of the empire, particularly when laws are to be made or interpreted.* . . . None of these, or others of the like kind, shall be undertaken or permitted *without the suffrage and free consent of all the States of the empire assembled in the diet.* They shall, above all things, have the perpetual right of making alliances between themselves and foreigners for their own preservation and security, provided, nevertheless, that such alliances are not directed against the emperor and empire, against the public peace, or against the present transaction in particular; and that they do not in any ways infringe the oath which they have all taken to the emperor or empire."\*

The influence of this treaty extended far beyond the limits of the German Empire, as we shall see.

The second great fact, of world-wide importance and of determinate bearing on our argument, is in the great secession of the nations of Europe from the Romish sovereignty and communion. Within the period we have assigned for the fifth vial epoch (about A. D. 1483-1648) there seceded from the spiritual and political autocracy of the popes, and ranged under the common title of Protestants, the following nations; namely, Germany, England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, and great numbers in France. The moral influence of this example in favor of religious liberty

\* Tytler's *History*, vol. ii, p. 452.

affected a much wider sphere. The “throne of the beast” was “full of darkness,” and “they gnawed their tongues for pain,” and they “blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and they repented not of their deeds.”

Prior to the period now under consideration, no king, for five hundred years, dared to incur the displeasure of the pope by disobedience to his commands; or, if otherwise, the obstinate potentate is excommunicated, the allegiance of his subjects annulled, and all persons forbidden to give him food or shelter. Any person offering food, shelter, or aid, would incur the severest penalties. If the convict king or sovereign repent, the penalties or penances imposed would be severe, often little less than death or torture.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE VIAL EPOCHS.—CONTINUED.

## The Sixth Vial.

*The Sixth Vial Period* is thus announced by the angel: “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Rev. xvi, 12–16.

It is clear enough that verse 12 points to a military expedition, or expeditions, of vast signification. The language is military. The pouring out of the vial “upon the great river Euphrates” also indicates that point as central to the operations of the epoch of the sixth vial. The previous vial was European, this is Oriental. How far east the movement is to extend we cannot positively speak, but the literal form of the language would extend it to the farthest limit of the East\*

\* Dr. Francis W. Upham, in his admirable and learned criticism on Matt ii, 1, 2, has made it clear that the word translated “east,” which occurs twice in the place, and being first in the plural (*ἀνατολῶν*, *an-*

as known in any age. This is indicated by the plural form of the word “*east*.” The “drying up” of the river Euphrates is for the removal of obstructions to the onward march of the Eastern army, “that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared.” The transportation of large armies, with their military baggage, across the Euphrates and Tigris, would be a serious delay and exposure. The drying up of the river removes the obstruction and “prepares” for the passage of the “kings of the East.” The plural form, “*kings* of the East,” would properly denote a general Oriental combination or alliance moving westward, passing the Euphrates, as if to meet the opposing army somewhere in Asia Minor. Indeed, it is an Oriental question to be settled within the general purview of the East—a question of civilization and religion—whether the dark and obstinate Islamism or Christ, the King of glory, shall reign. Tyrants and autocrats have never been willing to part with their irresponsible power, and have done it only by political or military force. Between Euphrates and the Bosphorus the question must be settled; and, as Mohammedanism is the most obstinate enemy of the cross in Asia, and as it is repeatedly alluded to in the Apocalypse (see chap. xix, 20, and xx, 10) in connection with the “beast” and other world forces of evil; and as it is in perfect propriety of connection, after speaking of the “beast” in

*atoloon*) and the second in the singular (*ἀνατολὴ, anatole*), should be translated thus: “Behold there came wise men from the FAR EAST to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews, for we have seen his star in THE EAST, and have come to worship him.” The *East* he would call Babylonia; the *Far East*, Persia. (See Dr. Upham’s book, entitled, *The Wise Men*, etc., chapters i and ii.) But later changes have extended our knowledge of the East, and what might have seemed a limitation of the East by Persia might better be applied now to the eastern limit of China.

the previous “vial” (vers. 10, 11), to speak of the “false prophet” as next in order of the world forces which are to be subordinated to the King Messiah’s dominion, therefore it is highly probable that Islamism is the burden of the prophet’s utterances in the sixth vial epoch.

It is proper here to remind the reader that we are now living in the latter part of the epoch of the sixth vial, as we interpret biblical chronology. We cannot, therefore, speak of matters *in extenso*, or much beyond the most probable import of the symbols; for it is a universal law of interpretation of prophecy, and specially of symbolical prophecy, that history is the interpreter of prophecy. We must, therefore, wait the orderly procession of history for a full development and completion of the oracle.

We proceed, then, to offer what we may be able to gather from the symbols and other allusions. On verse 13 the prophet says: “And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.” Verse 13. Here is a statement of the allied forces of antichrist; namely, first, the “dragon” power, or secular power, which is servility to the “beast;” secondly, the “beast,” or ecclesiastical force, the apostate Church; and, thirdly, the “false prophet,” or Mohammed. The first and second are allied against the latter, and all are against the Lord Christ. These three forces come “*out of the mouth*” of the triple world forces, that is, they legislate—make and declare law—whether in a state of war or peace. They are “the spirits of devils [demons] working miracles;” that is, *working wonders*, as the word *σημεῖα, σημεῖα*, often means, and should be thus translated here. Ver. 14. A wonder is not always a miracle. “These go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world.”

“Kings of the earth” are kings not in covenant with Christ, earth-born. The designation is clear. “Kings of the whole world” indicates the extent of their dominion as being world-wide, and the policy of these evil spirits is to concentrate their forces in one great final battle, or in a rapid succession of battles, thinking that numbers will prevail. And this was often the case in those times. “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Ver. 16. John quotes this last word with a slight variation from the Old Testament—the difference of *plain of Megiddo* for *mountain* or *hill* of *Megiddo*. In 2 Chron. xxxv, 22, and Zech. xii, 11, it is simply “Megiddo.” It was situated on the borders of the plain of Esdraelon, Palestine, and famous for the battles fought in its plains, especially that wherein the good king Josiah was slain, and to which the prophet refers thus: “And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel.” 2 Chron. xxxv, 25. Thus, when they would speak of a great national calamity, or national sorrow, they would speak proverbially, and say, “In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of *Megiddon*.” Zech. xii, 11. “The name Armageddon,” says Dr. Robinson, “therefore stands emblematically for a place of slaughter and mourning.”\*

“This plain,” says Dr. E. D. Clarke, “has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in this country from the days of Nebuchodonosor, King of Assyria [A. M. 3348, see Judith iii, 8-10], until the disastrous march of Napoleon Bonaparte from Egypt into Syria [A. D. 1799]. Jews, Gentiles, Sar-

\* Lexicon on the word.

cents, Christian crusaders and antichristian, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, and Arabs—warriors out of every nation which is under heaven—have pitched their tents upon the plains of Esdraelon, and have beheld the various banners of their nations wet with the dews of Tabor and of Hermon.”

It is sufficiently clear that Megiddo is the place alluded to, whether figuratively or literally. If the latter, it would be but probable that the forces should meet at the plain of Megiddo as a central point for the “Far East” and the European West. But in either case the central powers of the earth are met for decisive battle. The reference to “the great river Euphrates” marks it as being what is called in its broadest sense “the Eastern question,” and the delusive question over which the world forces are equally interested, and equally antagonistic to the Lord Messiah. And these hostile powers are now met for decisive action. They are three: the “*dragon*” power, or political powers not submitted to Christ; the “*beast*,” or papal power, and Islamism, or “the false prophet.” By these the powers of anti-christ will be broken.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE VIAL EPOCHS.—CONTINUED.

## The Seventh Vial.

*The seventh and last vial* is thus stated by the angel: “And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, *It is done.* And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.” Rev. xvi, 17-21.

Keeping in mind that we are in advance of history, and have been so since the early part of the preceding vial, we must finish our task by gathering up the items of symbolism and correlations which the text affords. It is a remarkable feature of the last three vials—first, that they mark a closing in of the ranks of the hostile nations as being intensive of the judgments; secondly, that they concentrate the judgments directly upon the antichristian powers. Thus the fifth vial is poured out “upon the seat of the *beast.*” Ver. 10. Unmistakably the *beast* is the papal autocracy. The sixth vial is

directed also to the secular power or powers as supportive of the religious supremacy, which, being located in the East, must be Mohammedan. Ver. 12. The seventh vial, as the symbols indicate, was poured out upon "great Babylon" (the *papal* supremacy), which now "came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Ver. 19.

The seventh vial "was poured out into the air." The figurative signification of this act may be, that God holds the forces of the atmosphere under his control, to protect or destroy, and can direct them at will. Thus immediately after the pouring the vial in the air, "there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, *It is done.* And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake. . . . And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." Vers. 18, 21. These are atmospheric phenomena, indicating that the air is the seat of some great and unexplained power and destiny, traveling rapidly as if of almost ubiquitous speed, "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even to the west." (Matt. xxiv, 27); and hence called the seat of "the prince of the power of the air." Eph. ii, 2. God's judgments are mysterious and marvelously executed. The pouring out of the vial into the air may be, therefore, an expression of the mysterious forces in nature and the rapidity of their operations when God arises to judgment.

When the seventh vial was poured out into the air, as we have just said, there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "*It is done.*" This is the fundamental idea of the seventh

trumpet. It announces that some great work is accomplished, but does not clearly specify what, leaving us to infer from a comparison of statements. Undoubtedly it means that the specific object, or objects, of the seventh vial epoch are accomplished; but what are they? If we turn to chapter x, 7, we find the first mention of the seventh trumpet epoch, with its particular work assigned. Thus: "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, *the mystery of God shall be finished*, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." In chapter xi, 15, it is recorded, in close connection with chapter x, 7, "The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world *are become the kingdoms* of our Lord and of his Christ." This subjugation of the kingdoms to Christ is not a universal conversion, but signifies that Christian law prevails, and freedom to worship God according to moral conviction and individual accountability meets no persecution or opposition by legal authority. In the fifteenth chapter of Revelation this subject is recalled. The prophet saw "seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God." This is the first announcement that the seventh trumpet epoch is resolved into seven vials of wrath. They are thus called, "*for in them is filled up the wrath of God*;" that is, the severe judgments of God against the enemies of the cross, and of human rights, have at last prevailed and established Messiah's kingdom. That this is the import of the language is evident from their triumphal chant by which they celebrated the victory. Thus: "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." "For all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Chap. xv, 3, 4. Also chapter xi, 17, 18, bearing upon this same subject, "We give

thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged [vindicated], and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."

Thus the eye of faith and the scope of prophecy had looked steadfastly down the ages to that cherished hour when, in the language of Daniel, referring to this very time, "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. vii, 27. Both Daniel and John speak clearly of a period of great sufferings of the Church by the persecuting power of the nations, and of this suffering to end in perfect victory. This special and noted period of the Church's suffering is that of the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist; and this victory is the millennium, as we shall soon see.

The downfall of antichrist, the great burden of the seventh vial epoch, is the result and outcome of twelve hundred and sixty years of divine forebearance, and of patient labor, suffering, and prayer, and projects itself, in variable degrees of persuasion, through the ages, terminating in a fall that no power of earth shall ever retrieve, and followed by great and unprecedented advances of gospel reformation. The process, as to successive order, will be gradual, like the day dawn, the rising sun, and in the meridian day. The destruction of antichrist is the last great (the greatest) achieve-

ment under God of the militant Church. In verse 19 of the sixteenth chapter it is said, "The great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell." The "great city" is understood to be the mystic "Babylon," and it is immediately added, "Great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of wine of the fierceness of his wrath." It is in the same connection said, "The cities of the nations fell," that is, those cities which had enriched themselves by subserviency to the beast, or Babylon, now fell from their high position of government, and the dominion passes into the hands of the saints.

In all these judgments we do not find a reformatory influence correspondingly great. To those who still adhere to the antichristian party the Gospel is "a savor of death unto death." "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent [one hundred and twenty-five pounds]: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." Ver. 21.

The reader will remember that the whole of the seventh vial, and the latter half of the sixth vial, are as yet unfulfilled prophecy, which we pass over, excepting that the import of the symbols and the analogy of prophecy will supply indices of the most general outline, till God shall turn prophecy into history—"he that runs shall read."

## CHAPTER XII.

## DOOM OF BABYLON.

The Great Rejoicing in Heaven—The Triumph of the Gospel—The Binding of Satan.

WE have reached Rev. xviii. Nothing can be said, on the question of chronology, further than that the seventeenth chapter identifies the Roman type of antichrist, and that the nineteenth chapter is an enlarged form of triumphal ode upon the fall of Babylon; both dating immediately after the seventh vial. Chap. xvi, 17-21. The order of thought in the eighteenth chapter, the wail and lament of the downfall of Babylon, may be thus stated: verses 1-3, an angel of great power descends from heaven and proclaims the fall of Babylon; verses 4-8, the call upon true Christians to come out of Babylon lest they become partakers of her sins and punishment; verses 9-19, the wail of those who profited by her merchandise; verses 20-23, the true Church called to triumph over the just and irreversible judgment of God for the fall of this great enemy of Christ and his Church; verse 24, the declaration of her crimes, and of her persecutions of the Church, “for in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”

It will be seen that in verse 1, chapter xviii, John saw “another angel *come down from heaven*.” That angel was specially directed to publish on earth the facts upon which the judgment of God is measured out upon antichrist and his followers. We are now called to transfer the order of victory from earth to heaven.

This is stated chapter xix, 1, whence John heard the triumphal chants. Thus: "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people *in heaven*, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders [or princes] and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen ; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, these are the true sayings of God."\*

Thus in heaven and upon the earth will saints unite to celebrate the glorious victories of the cross. We must beware here that we do not misjudge our chronological position. We are not in the millennium, but in the near future of that glorious event. We have little else to do but to go up and take possession of the goodly land; but a final test is yet to come. That test is in the last death throes of the "beast," or antichrist, after

\* The Marriage of the Lamb will be treated in a future chapter.

his downfall. The shattered forces of the enemy must be recalled and a final effort made to regain the lost. It was so in the case of the sixth vial (we are now in the eighth vial epoch), in the battle of Armageddon called “the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (chap. xvi, 14, 16), and it will be so in the great battle of “Gog and Magog” (chap. xx, 8, 9), the last upon record.

After the alleluia chants on the occasion of the fall of antichrist, immediately the victories of the Lamb are urged forward with unabated and unprecedented success. It had been already predicted that the antichristian forces “shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” Chap. xvii, 14. But now, upon a grander scale, the victories of the Lamb are multiplied, with assured and final success. No description of uninspired human skill can equal that of the inspired prophet. He says: “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron [that is, the rebellious people]: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.”

Chap. xix, 11-16. How long the rhapsodies of this vision continued we have no data to determine, but its relative position in the order of events is clear enough. Thus, after the seventh *yial* (chap. xvi, 17), follows the description and Roman type of the harlot, or antichrist (chap. xvii); then the wail of the supporters of antichrist (chap. xviii); then the *alleluia* chant in heaven of the triumph of the Church (chap. xix, 1-9); then the triumphal progress of the true Church (chap. xix, 11); thence the organized opposition of the enemies of the Church, a brief and last resistance and overthrow. Chap. xix, 17-20. This last is a characteristic description of an ancient battle and victory, but must here be taken figuratively only. Thus the army that followed the conqueror "was clothed in fine linen, white and clean," the emblem of *purity*; and the sword of the conqueror "proceeded out of his mouth," a standing symbol for the *word* and *judgment* of God. In no other sense could a sword proceed out of the mouth.\* Elsewhere the qualities of this conquering army of the ages are given: "They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth;" "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death;" "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and king of kings, and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Chap. xiv, 4. and xii, 11, and xvii, 14.

It should be carefully observed that from the fall of

\* Thus, Isa. xlix, 2, "The Lord hath made my mouth like a sharp sword." Rev. i, 16, "And out of his mouth went the sharp two-edged sword." And ii, 16, "Out of his mouth went a two-edged sword." Heb. iv, 12, "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Eph. vi, 17, "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

antichrist, which dates at the close of the seventh vial epoch (chap. xvi, 19), and is there called "Great Babylon, which came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath," to the millennium (chap. xx, 4), is properly a transition period, a brief interval, in which, as we have seen, the conquest of the nations was completed, the marriage of the Lamb announced, and the Gospel greatly extended. The ruling of the smitten nations "with a rod of iron" (ver. 15), applies to those who still reject the dominion of Christ and his Gospel. These come under the iron rule of penal judgment. His "treading the wine-press of the wrath of God" is a pledge of unshrieked and irreversible judgment by Christ himself upon all who resist his authority. Justice and judgment are from him alone. In short, as the Gospel spreads, and the powerful sway of public sentiment and hallowed obedience obtains, the judgments of God will grow more clearly self-asserting ("for thy judgments are made manifest," chap. xv, 4), and correspondingly severe upon the rebellious nations. It is the experience of the ages that in all great gospel reformations the combat thickens and intensifies, as the proposed reformations are seen to be fundamental to society, and the spirit of the reformers is resolute and faithful and uncompromising.

The destruction of the enemies of Christ, here and so often referred to, must not be understood in all cases as including and denoting their death, but as always defeating and destroying their political power, by which alone they could persecute and oppose Christ and his kingdom, or Church.

It is not stated how long this quickened impulse of spiritual conquest of the King of kings continued, but it is clearly indicated that though antichristianism was

hopelessly destroyed, as to its organization and its power to persecute, still there were elements of unsubdued hostility in many individuals. The living Church was in the ascendancy, not by force of an imperial edict, backed by the terror of a conquering army, as in the case of Constantine the Great, A. D. 312, or Charlemagne, A. D. 800, but by the all-conquering power of spiritual light and moral conviction. External obstructions to free and open confession of Christ are now removed, and men are left free to act and declare their Christian beliefs and experience without hinderance from government interference and proscription. But enmity to Christ exists in many minds, and it is only in accord with what we know to have been in similar cases in the world's history, that we see the vanquished enemies of Christ now rallying for a last and desperate battle for the recovery of their lost power. The battle will be great, desperate, and decisive. The King of kings is in the field with his faithful and dauntless followers. The battle will be, as to its breadth and intensity, like that of "Armageddon" (Megiddo, Rev. xvi, 16), proverbially great. A defiant angel appears and declares the result. The revelator thus describes the scene:

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and

with him the false prophet that wrought miracles [or signs] before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Rev. xix, 17-21.

We do not consider this last and desperate struggle to regain the antichristian dominion to be a prolonged effort. On the contrary, it is the death throe of the enemies of Christ who are now extinguished; not every individual, but so far as their organic structure and their civil and social power to obstruct the Gospel are concerned. They met and were vanquished. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might." Judg. v, 31.

One more act is thrown upon the scene before we enter the long-looked-for millennium. John gives it thus: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season." Chap. xx, 1-3.

It is easily perceived that this startling imagery denotes an effectual restraint thrown over the tempting power. Religious life is made easy when temptation and persecution are withdrawn. The titles herein given the tempter, of "dragon, serpent, devil, Satan," suggest the varied forms and subtlety of the prime enemy of

souls, and of Christ. This binding of Satan, and casting him into the bottomless pit, is the last preliminary to the full introduction of the millennium. It is in itself a millennium. The suffering Church has not suffered in vain. Through all the dark ages of the reign of anti-christ, Satan, in his varied forms of seduction or coercion, of terror or guile, of the subtle serpent or the "roaring lion," had brought the known world chiefly under his sway, leading men captive at his will. But now, He that is "stronger than the strong man" has entered his citadel, and the tempter is not only laid under restraint, but thrown into prison, shut up, and a seal put upon him. His prison is "the bottomless pit." In Luke viii, 31, it is recorded that the evil spirits besought Christ "that he would not command them to go out into *the deep*," where the word *ἀβύσσος, abussos*, should be translated *bottomless pit* or *bottomless deep*, its literal signification. The same also as Rev. xx, 1-3, and in four other places in the Apocalypse. Peter speaks of them as the angels that sinned, whom God spared not, but "delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." Jude also gives a warning judgment in the example of "the angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, whom God hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto judgment of the great day." 2 Pet. ii, 4; Jude 6. A limited range has been allowed, but now, in the millennial period, the tempter, the arch deceiver, is shut up. This abatement of the tempting power might be supposed to be a lively description of the waning resources of the beast and antichrist—the result of long and faithful and successful grappling with errors and vices—but the symbols seem to require, in addition to simple moral results, the co-operation of government authority protecting the rights of all in the free choice of their faith. And such

is the fact in all human governments, that as moral force increases among the masses, government action will interfere and recognize the legitimacy of the achievements by conforming the laws to the advanced moral convictions of the people. But in the case before us we cannot see but the binding of the tempter is a government act establishing what in the realm of moral forces has been attained, and giving power and scope and protection to the kingdom of Christ.

“It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” See 1 John iii, 2. We say it is remarkable that such a one could write the last two chapters of the Revelation. We do not know what shall be the full bliss and adaptations of the resurrection body, but it is sufficient to know that heaven, and our adaptations to it, shall transcend all human example or conception. The gorgeous symbolism of the new Jerusalem gives but a faint idea of the condition and surroundings of the “Bride” with her “Lord,” “when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.” 2 Thess. i, 10. If the statements of chapter xix, 7-9, describe the marriage in its historical nature and dress, the statements of chapter xxi give the consummation of the Church’s reward and honor and external condition. If the former leaves the Church in the millennial glory, the latter reveals her happy condition after the millennium, after the judgment-day, in the midst of the eternal glory. Again we say, “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of Life.” Rev. xxi, 27.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## PERSONAL CHARACTER OF ANTICHRIST.

THE periods of the vials are ended, and the wrathful vengeance for the blood of the martyrs and for the persecution of the saints is poured forth. But we cannot now hasten to celebrate even so great an event until the attendant angel shall have explained to the prophet more definitely the features and character of their now fallen persecutor. The subject is contained in the seventeenth chapter. John thus states it:

“And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Rev. xvii, 1, 2.

In order to comply with the invitation of the angel, to learn what is “the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon the many waters,” we shall treat the items serially.

1. And first, the arch enemy of God, that has engrossed throughout the periods of the seven vials the chief concern, is described as “the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.” Ver. 1. This symbol is fully explained in verse 15: “The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Her “sitting upon” these “peoples and multitudes,” etc., indicates her su-

preme control of them, and their base obsequiousness toward her. This needs no further explanation. The world never witnessed such mean compliance on the part of the people and princes, and such cruelty of exaction of the papal authority, as in the Roman hierarchy from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries.

2. Secondly, John "saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." Ver. 3. "Purple and scarlet were the colors of the imperial habit; the purple in times of peace, and the scarlet in times of war. It is well known these are the colors used by the pope and cardinals; so that to be raised to the purple, or to the scarlet hat, is used to express being made a cardinal. The use of jewels for state and magnificence is too well known to be insisted on. The golden cup in her hand, full of abomination and filthiness of her fornication, may be an allusion to those philters, or love-potions, which prostitutes and lewd women were used to prepare, or it may refer more simply to the common effects of drunkenness and debauchery."\*

3. In verse 3 the woman that figures so largely in this vision is said to sit upon a scarlet-colored beast "having seven heads and ten horns." This "beast" is commonly understood to be the Roman power in Europe, or the Latin Empire, or the Western Empire of Rome, out of which rose ten kingdoms, all of which were obsequious to the papal authority. The angel nuncio thus explains: "The ten horns that thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet." Ver. 12. That is, out of the ruins of the Western Empire of Rome, demolished by the Northern barbarians in A. D. 476, there were to arise ten kingdoms, but the political convulsions had not yet settled so that

\* Lowman.

the boundaries of the new kingdoms of Europe could be established.

4. In verse 8 it is said, “The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold *the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*”

The obscurity of this description disappears when we cast our eyes over the political aspect of Roman history, and see the varied, and yet progressive, history of the papacy. In the early part of the fourth century Constantine the Great established the Christian religion by law as the religion of the Roman Empire. This gave the papal hierarchy every facility to develop and establish its tendency to that blasphemous usurpation of power which it sought. Thus, and in this sense, the apocalyptic beast “*was;*” that is, it already existed. Two hundred years later the western, or European, part of the Roman Empire was demolished by the Northern barbarians, and to all human appearance the Church must be engulfed in floods of barbarism. Nothing remained, politically, of the Western Empire but the city of Rome and a few strong cities which were still attached to the eastern branch by a lieutenancy. But, contrariwise, they found in the Church, though far from the standards of the apostles and Christ, a solid organization of Church law, which was more effective in controlling society than the sword and spear. The Church had modeled a code of law after the Roman type and spirit. Its form was ecclesiastic, but its spirit was that of the old imperial Rome.

But now a new and more dangerous enemy arose. The Lombards, who had long held Northern Italy, now

resolved to complete their Italian conquest, and moved their army toward Rome for that purpose. The papacy was now in great peril. Luitprand, King of the Lombards, was not a friend of the pope, though he wished not to be accounted an enemy, and there was not a military force in Italy to withstand the invader. In vain did the pope appeal to the Byzantine emperor for help. One only resort remained; namely, appeal to the friendly disposition of Pepin, Emperor of France. The pope had already conferred upon him a great favor in sanctioning the change of dynasty from the Merovingian to the Carlovingian line, which brought Pepin and his son Charlemagne to the imperial throne.

In A. D. 744 Luitprand, the Lombard king, died, and was succeeded by his son Astolph, who "declared himself the equal enemy of the Emperor of France and the pope;" and at another time declared "he would not leave the pope a foot of land." No hope of honorable conditions of peace could be expected. The pope, Stephen II., exerted every, and almost incredible, effort to avert the impending doom.

At this crisis Pepin, who had accepted the cause of Pope Stephen, had passed the Alps, and appeared before the walls of Rome. Astolph submitted, and obtained an ignominious peace, pledging, under oath, to cease the war and restore the territory of Rome.

Scarcely, however, had Pepin withdrawn his army, when Astolph renewed the war, wasting provinces and besieging Rome. Things had now come to a desperate pass. To recall the troops of Pepin was much more doubtful and difficult than at first, and the spirit of the war was now more vengeful. The pope, however, knew no rest. In his second letter to Pepin he says: "Astolph is at the gates of Rome; he is threatening, if they did not yield up the pope, to put the whole city

to the sword. He had burned all the villas and the suburbs; he had not spared the churches; the very altars were plundered and defiled; nuns violated; infants torn from their mothers' breasts; the mothers polluted—all the horrors of war were ready to break on the devoted city, which had now endured the siege of fifty-five days. He conjured him, by God and his holy mother, by the angels of heaven, by the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, and by the last day." Astolph "demanded the surrender of the pope." "He demanded that the Romans should give up the pope into his hands, and on these terms only would he spare the city."

The hours flew rapidly; the Franks were distant and tardy. Pepin was offered "victory over all the barbarian nations and eternal life" if would come to the rescue. Stephen was wrought to an agony, and in this urgency conceived the unprecedented and impious device of forging a letter from St. Peter himself to Pepin, urging him to hasten the relief of the pope. The letter is as follows:

"I, Peter the apostle, protest, admonish, and conjure you, the most Christian kings, Pepin, Charles, and Carloman, with all the hierarchy, bishops, abbots, priests, and all monks; all judges, dukes, counts, and the whole people of the Franks. The mother of God likewise adjures you, and admonishes and commands you, she as well as the thrones and dominions, and all the hosts of heaven, to save the beloved of Rome from the detested Lombards. If ye hasten, I, Peter the apostle, promise you my protection in this life and in the next, will prepare for you the most glorious mansions in heaven, and will bestow on you the everlasting joys of Paradise. Make common cause with my people of Rome, and I will grant whatever ye may pray for. I

conjure you not to yield up this city to be lacerated and tormented by the Lombards, lest your own souls be lacerated and tormented in hell, with the devil and his pestilential angels. Of all nations under heaven, the Franks are highest in the esteem of St. Peter; to me you owe all your victories. Obey, and obey speedily, and by my suffrage our Lord Jesus Christ will give you in this life length of days, security, victory; in the life to come will multiply his blessings upon you, among his saints and angels.”\*

The Franks, tardy in their preparations, when once under marching orders moved to the scene of action with celerity. At the sight of the French army the Lombards again submitted, and the territory taken by Astolph was restored. Rome and the exarchate were given by Pepin to the pope as an absolute and inalienable possession. Henceforth the pope becomes a temporal prince and sovereign, as well as spiritual and ecclesiastical.

We turn now to the explication of the prophetic statement, that the beast which John saw “*was, and is not, and yet is*,” which we understand to mean that the persecuting power represented in the beast, or papacy, was supposed “by them that dwell on the earth [worldlings], whose names were not written in the book of life,” to be firmly established, as we have mentioned, in its usurped authority, and in this sense “*he was*”; and then, by judgment of God, was reversed in condition, so that his liberty and power were taken from him, and his life was for a season in great jeopardy, so that it might be said, to human view, “*He is not*;” or, as one would say, “All is lost.” And this would express the popular feeling. Then, by change of political circumstances, the hierarchy was relieved and

\* See Milman’s *Latin Christianity*, vol. ii, chap. 2.

restored, so that then it would be said, "*He yet is.*" If it be said that these particulars are not of such magnitude and breadth of continuance as to justify the place we have here given them, we have only to say that the moral, political, and ecclesiastical importance of the events recorded have nothing to exceed or equal them in European history. On this point we shall not be controverted.

The period of the greatest exposure of the life of the popes, particularly of Stephen II., embraced about five years, but the troubled elements in which the popes were confirmed in the princely donation of the exarchate did not subside till twenty years afterward, when, by providential judgment, Charlemagne reaffirmed the act of Pepin.

We are to judge of events by their influence for good or evil on the kingdom of Christ, or that of anti-christ, and by that test the world has not an age to surpass it. Our notices of history are necessarily brief, but, as we judge, sufficient.

5. The Roman type and character are fully and wonderfully set forth in verses 9-12: "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast."

This description is intensively of Roman type. The "seven heads" we are told (ver. 9) are "seven mountains on which the woman sitteth," and the same represent "seven kings," or forms of government. Of these

forms of government “five are fallen, and one is,” that is, still in power, “and the other is not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.” Ver. 10. As face answereth to face in a glass, so also does the symbolic prophecy reflect the historic facts. Rome is known as the mistress of the world, “sitting upon her seven hills,” and is almost as familiarly known by this poetically descriptive title as by her historic name. Tacitus, her own historian, says: “Rome was first governed by kings, then by consuls, by dictators, by decimvirs, and by military tribunes with consular authority.”\* Mr. Waple, quoted by Lowman, says: “Concerning the first five, that they were fallen or passed away at the time of the vision, and without any distinct account of them, their time, names, differences, or the order of their succession among themselves, for which he gives this good reason: because they were of no further use to this prophecy than to show that the one head then in being was the sixth of the seven, after five already past. We have no need, then, to inquire, with great exactness, what these five forms of government were.”

After the notice of the five kings in verse 8 it is further stated, concerning the two remaining, that “*one is*, and the other is *not yet come*; and when he cometh, *he must continue a short space*.” The first of these two is the imperial, and was in force when John wrote. The second, which had not yet come, was the exarchate, or lieutenancy, which arose in Italy after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, and continued over two hundred years, terminating in the transfer of its territory to the pope, Stephen II., and the severance of the last political link that had connected the East and West divisions of the Roman Empire.

\* Tacitus, Lib. i, cap. 1.

It is clear enough from these showings that verses 9 and 10 are a description of Roman law and government introduced for ulterior ends, and the wonderful literality of the figures makes them as obvious as historic names. The first clause of verse 9 anticipates this: "And here is the mind which hath wisdom;" that is, here, by these symbols as tests, will be manifested the mind that hath understanding, giving careful attention to the prophecy; but others, not careful in spiritual things, walk on in darkness.

The statements of verse 11 in this chapter touch and bring to view all that is of leading importance in the seventeenth chapter, and indeed, we might say, all within chapters x to xviii, for the leading theme is antichrist. It reads thus: "And the beast that was, and is not, *even he is the eighth*, and is *of the seven*, and goeth into perdition." In verse 8 the angel nuncio calls it "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." This has been mentioned already in the preceding part of this chapter. Our attention at this point is called to the "beast" which is the "eighth" form of Roman government. In the language of the angel who is explaining to John, this eighth form of Roman government is not found in political Roman history, but in prophecy only. It is a form of government which rose within the western limits of the old Roman government by Romans, and is, says John, "*of the seven* forms of Roman dominion, yet *sui generis* of its own type. The preposition *εκ*, translated *of*, should receive here its full and radical signification, *out of*—the "eighth" form of government "is *out of* the seven." It is Romish in its juridical cast, its ambition to attain universal dominion, its genius and aims, its cruelty, its oppression. "But Rome was a civic power." The beast and antichrist are, professedly, a religious power; but they assume, and for a thousand

years have executed, supreme secular power over kings and all civil power, and would now exercise it but for the force of public sentiment. The doom of the beast is every-where given the same—"he shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition."

Upon the forehead of this beastly woman "was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." Verse 5. "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication." Ver. 4. These symbolical descriptions of the moral type of antichrist are quite common in poetic and prophetic Scripture, and denote infidelity of the Church to whom she had been really, but now only professionally, allied. Her attaching her titles "upon her forehead" denotes the shameless exposure of her fornication.

6. In verses 12, 13, we have a further description of antichrist: "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Whether the word "ten" in the mention of the "ten kings" should be taken literally, or as a complement or complete number, has been doubted, and, so far as the historic authority is concerned, it is of no importance. "What we translate '*one hour*,' *μίαν ώραν*, ought to have been translated '*the same hour*,' or point of time, as several learned interpreters have justly observed."\* This brings out an important fact; namely, that in reconstructing the nations that sprang up after the fall of Western Rome the princes and conquerors acted in joint fellowship and harmony

\* Lowman.

with the papacy. Literally, “they received power as kings *the same hour*, or time, with the beast.” And this is a fact—that at this time, the latter part of the eighth century, the sovereigns of Europe paid their homage to the popes and acted subordinately to them. It is a fact also that at that time the nationalities of Europe had not settled and were not determined. The ten kings “had received no kingdom as yet.” The successors of Charlemagne were not able to hold the limits of his empire as he left them, nor could they for a hundred years after.

7. Two facts of world-wide significance meet us here. The first is given thus: “These (the hostile kings) have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb.” Vers. 13, 14. This applies, with little abatement or exception, from the eighth to the sixteenth centuries. The history of Europe during these centuries is too patent to require formal proof.

The second great fact is thus stated: “And the Lamb shall overcome them [the hostile kings]. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put it in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” Vers. 14, 16, 17.

Here, then, we have it, plain and indisputable, that the European nations “will have one mind, to give their power and strength unto the beast, and to make war with the Lamb;” and this state of things shall continue for a long period of time. But in the end the Lamb shall overcome, “for he is Lord of lords and King of kings.” The conquest is complete. John says: “The

ten horns [sovereigns] which he saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, *until the words of God shall be fulfilled.*" Vers. 16, 17. Let any one cast an eye of retrospection over the Middle Ages, and compare the same with the present, and our meaning will be fully seen.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## FOREGLEAMS OF MILLENNIUM.

THE date of Christ's reign upon the earth is the date of the plan of redemption. When he took upon himself to redeem us unto God he assumed the reins of universal government. "All power was given unto him in heaven and in earth." But man was in hostility to God and refused submission. As the government passed from the Father to the Son, for the ends of redemption, the sovereignty, now vested in Christ, must be sustained upon principles of gospel provision and human free agency and accountability; and allegiance to God in Christ must be the contingent of restored peace. Just as far, therefore, as the redemptive scheme takes effect, just so far the "kingdom of heaven" is restored and re-established. Submission to the kingdom of God is submission to the Son of God as king. Christ "must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet." 1 Cor. xv, 25. Those who accept the conditions of reconciliation will be restored—brought back under the protection and immunities of law; but those who still rebel must be subdued by force—held under unwilling arrest by law. They persistently refuse to be governed by the precept of law, and must, therefore, be governed by the penal authority of law.

I. This is the light in which the Old and New Testaments view and declare the subject. Take an example of the tone and language of Old Testament prophecy:

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine

a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Jehovah and against his Messiah, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: Jehovah shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss [submit to] the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Psa. ii.

II. In the same strain of triumphant sovereignty the author of the one hundred and tenth psalm delivers one of the most remarkable prophecies of King Messiah's reign which is on record:

"Jehovah said unto my Lord [adonee], Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

"Jehovah shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Jehovah at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his

wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

III. It is a characteristic feature of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies that they are Jehovic; that is, they describe Jehovah as doing what, in New Testament times, is ascribed to Messiah, as in the missionary psalms, xciii and xcv-xcviii. But in Psalms ii and ex Jehovah is clearly distinguished from *Messiah* (ii, 2) and *Adonah*, or Lord (ex, 1). The time for revealing the person of Christ had not yet come; Christ had not yet taken upon him our flesh; but in these psalms the true Hebrew King who is to reign over the nations is clearly typified and designated, and in this character he is quoted in the New Testament.

The question, "Will Christ ever rule over the nations of the earth?" has been answered in the affirmative by the suffering Church in all ages. Often has the midnight traveler asked, as in the "burden of Dumah," "Watchman, what of the night?" to which prophecy certainly gives an answer fraught with hope and satisfaction. Daniel gives no equivocal utterance when he says: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known . . . what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

"I beheld . . . until the Ancient of days came and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High;

and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions [rulers] shall serve and obey him." Dan. ii, 44, 45, and vii, 21, 22, 27.

It is not our purpose to enter at large upon the doctrine of the kingly rule of Christ over the nations; we shall assume mainly, what is universally admitted by all believers in divine revelation, that the moral government is administered by the Mediator to whom all power in heaven and upon the earth is given. He only has "the keys of Hades and of death." Rev. i, 18. "King of kings, and Lord of lords." Rev. xix, 16. And his dominion is not conditioned upon the will and choice of men, but upon the immutable plan and purpose of the persons of the Godhead, who formed and sealed the wondrous scheme of redemption. Christ rules in the universe as really now as he will in the millennial glory. The date of his power is coincident with the date of the plan of redemption.

IV. But there is a class of New Testament Scriptures, too much overlooked, which, nevertheless, have an important, one should say determinate, bearing on the subject of the kingly sovereignty of our Lord and Saviour, which also shed light on the millennial epoch. Indeed, they literally converge to that glorious, central point. We refer to the practice of distinguishing in advance what is to be achieved in and by the prophetic epochs. Thus, for example, the genius and results of the divine advent of our Saviour, at his first appearing, are announced at his birth by the song of the "multitude of the heavenly hosts," saying, "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke

ii, 14. And thus the prophetic epochs are distinguished and assured, at their several and successive openings, by intimating the results to be attained by them severally. These anticipations we call foregleams.

The Scriptures to which we refer are chiefly in the Apocalypse, from chapter x to chapter xx. We quote first from Rev. x, 6, 7. The periods of the "six seals," and of the "six trumpets," had passed. The tenth chapter is an interlude to the regular succession of periods, and a prelude to the great epoch of the "seventh trumpet." An angel is commissioned to make an announcement of great moment, an announcement in advance of all previous prophecies as to the final triumph of the Church. The announcement, in consideration of its great moment, is given in the form of an oath, and is as follows: "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, *that the time is not yet* [or, *that the time shall not be yet*]: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound [or, when he shall sound], **THE MYSTERY OF GOD SHOULD BE FINISHED, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.**"

"The mystery of God" we understand to be his mysterious providence in allowing the corrupt powers of this world to inflict so great sufferings upon the Church. But a limit to these sanguinary struggles is now fixed, and an intimation of time given. Emphatically it is now said, "IT IS DONE." We say this is in advance of all previous prophecy. Daniel saw it, but not so clearly and fully as John. From this hill-top of prophecy the end of persecution is discovered. It is,

as we shall see, the true millennium. It is within the compass of the "last days," the last trumpet, the last triumphal prophetic epoch, at the terminus of years of antichrist. Here forever end the sufferings and the persecutions of the Church. Beyond this "end of the mystery of God," lie the millennium, the judgment-day and the eternal states of men.

Meanwhile great and sore conflicts yet remain, but the final victory is discovered afar, and is sure. Like the weather-worn mariner, they shout to see "land ahead," though distant.

V. Parallel to this passage is Dan. xii, 6, 7. When it was asked, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" we understand him to mean the same as John: How long shall it be till "the mystery of God shall be finished?" And thus the answering angel, in exact accord with the angel of the Apocalypse, replied, as will appear by the following synopsis:

Dan. xii, 6-8. "And one said to the man clothed in linen, *How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?* And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, *that it shall be for a time, times, and a half;* and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."

Rev. x, 5-7. "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, . . . that the time is not yet: *but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall sound, THE MYSTERY OF GOD SHALL BE FINISHED,* as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."

Observe, that both Daniel and John earnestly desired to know the final outcome of all these predicted events which John calls "the mystery of God," and Daniel calls "these wonders;" that in each case the angel nuncio

answered in the form of oath, with uplifted hands, indicating the solemnity and importance of the disclosure, the one standing by the river (Hiddekel, or Tigris, chap. x, 4), the other "with his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth;" both swear "by him that liveth forever." Daniel brought the terminus of the vision within the "time, times, and a half;" John brought it within "the seventh trumpet"—both covering precisely the same period. Here ends the vision of Daniel; but John carries us in chronological order through the millennium, the resurrection, the judgment-day, and the final rewards, the restitution.

VI. The point to be noted here, as specially germane to our argument, is, that within the seventh trumpet period the persecution of the Church forever ends, and the glorious rewards begin. "In the days of the voice of the seventh trumpet, when he shall sound, the mystery of God shall be finished." It is remarkable that from the downfall of Babylon to the judgment-day, the Bible cites no instance of persecution, no suffering of the saints. It is true that an attempt was made to assault the Church (Rev. xx, 7-10), but it was wholly abortive. Instant judgment "from God out of heaven devoured them." The great conflict, which John symbolized by the sanguinary history of Megiddo ("Armageddon," chap. xvi, 16), occurred earlier under the sixth vial; but under the seventh vial "great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Chap. xvi, 19. From that hour the suffering Church came from under the domination of her enemies, and the kingdom of our Lord and Christ was not only established, but became the ruling power in the world. Sinners and enemies of the Church there were in the world, but their power to hurt was forever gone.

VII. But a more complete idea of the import and breadth of the events of the seventh trumpet, or epoch, is given in Rev. xi, 15-18, which we here give:

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth.”

Consider here that the descriptive title assumed—“O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come”—is repeated verbatim from chapter i, 8, “which is, and which was, and which is to come.” In the latter assumed by Christ; in the former ascribed to the “Lord God Almighty.” Consider further that the themes of these sacred chants are nothing else than condensed statements of events and results which characterize the period of the seventh trumpet, and which are to develop into historic facts in their times. The grand result only is given.

Consider further that the notable events of the epoch are mentioned in succession; namely, first, the resumption of a more marked administration of justice toward the enemies of Christ—“Thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned;” secondly, the nations were angry because the Church pressed more

vigorously the claims of gospel purity and freedom; and as they resisted the judgments of God so the judgments were intensified. Thirdly, the time of the dead that they should be judged had come, when God will call to account them that had destroyed the earth in all the ages. This would appear to refer to the final judgment of the wicked (Rev. xx, 11-15); for the seventh trumpet period reaches down to the final judgment-day. But if it refer to the righteous, which is more probable, the word "*judgment*" must be taken in the sense of *acquittal, vindication*, which would also be a judgment, for acquittal of the righteous is as much the office of judicial justice, and a legal judgment, as condemnation of the wicked. It would make a good sense to read, "the time of the dead [saints] that they should be *vindicated*." They had been martyred and persecuted under false and lying accusation: they are now to be acquitted before the universe and the reproach removed. Fourthly, Christ "will give reward to his servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear his name, small and great." Fifthly, "He will destroy them that destroy the earth." The issue is great and world-wide, and the victory commensurate. The earth is the scene of both battle and victory. The final millennial result of the epoch of the seventh trumpet is thus stated: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

Ver. 15.

VIII. In another place than that last quoted, and in other imagery, the reign of Christ upon the earth, and the downfall of antichristian nations, and of antichrist himself, is foretold as occurring under the period of the seventh trumpet. Thus, after a long conflict with the terrible "dragon," and a great victory attained, the revelator records:

“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: *for the accuser of our brethren is cast down*, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.” Rev. xii, 10-12.

IX. Another voice of distant triumph from the depth and darkness through which the suffering, persecuted Church is passing, is found in Rev. xiv, 6-8, the latter part of the epoch of the seventh trumpet: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

X. Again they rejoice in heaven over the assured anticipation of victory of the Church and the exaltation of Christ: “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy, for all nations shall come and worship before thee; *for thy judgments are made manifest.*” Rev. xv, 3, 4.

XI. Two great events filled the vision of the prophet, as he wrote the words of these last two quotations;

namely, the fall of antichrist and the spread and establishment of the gospel kingdom—events which usher in the millennium. Antichrist is not only an individual power, clothed with the attributes of a complete autonomy, but represents those, also, who are in sympathy and subordination to the “beast;” the secular powers upholding him and executing his will. It is a singular union of political sovereignty and religious apostasy. This combination presented the most intolerant hypocrisy, blasphemy, and unrelenting cruelty the world has ever witnessed. The career of this “mother of harlots,” this mystic “Babylon,” this “abomination of the earth,” was checked and overthrown by the seven “vials of the wrath of God.” The judgments of God were the “rod of iron” by which the enemies of Jehovah were “dashed in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” Psa. ii, 9. When the seventh and last vial was poured out, it was signally announced, “IT IS FINISHED.” “And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. Rev. xvi, 17, 19. It should be most seriously considered that in the quotation (chap. xv, 3, 5) Christ is called “King of saints,” thus keeping the issue between Christ the Lord and his enemies prominently before all; and the clause, “For thy judgments are made manifest,” clearly indicating that the judgments falling upon the wicked were publicly recognized and confessed as the visitations of God. In no other sense could the word ἐφανερώθηδαν, “Thy judgments are made manifest,” be understood.

XII. In chapter xviii the wailing of the nations at the downfall of Babylon is recorded: “For all nations had drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth had committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich

through the abundance of her delicacies. . . . And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." Chap. xviii, 3, 24.

Following this was a triumphal chant in heaven, "saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. . . . And the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures, fell down and worshiped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saing, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Rev. xix, 1-7.

These are not the rhapsodies of a disordered brain, nor the hyperboles of an excited imagination. They are "the true sayings of God." They certainly teach us of an antichristian power in close political alliance with the nations, and in most deadly hostility to the true followers of Christ. It teaches the final overthrow of that power whose various names, iniquitous doings, and historic characteristics are given, chapter xvii. The parallel is found in Dan. vii, 8, 13, 14, 21, 22, 24-28. The catastrophe of this "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH," is irretrievable, "for ever and ever," and the rejoicing of saints and angels in earth and heaven is correspondingly great. Every persecuting

power organized and arrayed against the Church, by whatever name or title, from the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. xi, 15-18) on to the twentieth chapter of Revelation, is included in this downfall of mystic Babylon and her confederates. It is not within the scope of our subject to enter at large upon the interpretation of these symbolic prophecies; it is enough here to say that they represent the overthrow of all persecuting, organized, falsely professing Christian powers. These have always been the bitterest enemies of Christ. "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Rev. xvii, 13, 14. We have now brought down the foregleams of the millennium to the dawn of that long-looked-for day; and the order of events finds us at Rev. xix, 6. It will be clearly seen that although Christ has led his Church through great and terrible sufferings yet he has assured them, from age to age, on the page of prophecy, that victory will come at last, when "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. vii, 27.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE MILLENNIUM.

IN our citation from the Apocalypse we have assumed that the events therein mentioned supply a chronological claim of traceable succession; that the extent of time covered by them reaches from the beginning of the second century, or from the death of John the apostle, down to the judgment-day; that the successive order of events is an essential factor in their right interpretation; that there is no other intimation of time but that of the succession of events till we come to chapters xi, xii, and xiii, where we have the "time, times, and half a time," "the forty and two months," and "a thousand two hundred and three score days," equal, in each alike, to twelve hundred and sixty solar years, being the period of the reign of antichrist; that this period of the reign and downfall of antichrist is followed by the triumphal spread of the Gospel and the dominion and final triumph of Christ and his kingdom on the earth.

Prophecy had already identified the footsteps of King Messiah in the world's history, pointing and leading to the great ultimate of gospel triumph. The millennial period, though apparently far in the dim distance, still filled the visions of faith and hope, thus "enduring as seeing him who is invisible." We have seen in the previous chapter that every sub-period and every statement of the period of the seventh trumpet converged its prophetic light upon the millennial age. This is an important clew to the true exposition. Dur-

ing twelve hundred and sixty years—the period of anti-christ—the faithful, protesting, witnessing, and suffering Church rested on the assured return of Christ, and the thousand years of his peaceful reign on the earth.

It is out of all analogy in the prophetic economy to suppose so great a fact in the militant Church as that of the millennium was to transpire, and no adequate notice of it be made in the Old Testament by any of the evangelical seers. Such an omission would withhold from the Church an indispensable motive power, and leave the doctrinal system incomplete. And thus were the saints of old wont to speak of a “golden age” yet to come, when the theocracy should be fully realized, especially in the house and lineage of David. This has been already referred to. See Psa. ii and cx; lxxxix, 20-29; exxxii, 11-18; Amos ix, 11; Acts xv, 14-17.

But none of the prophets have excelled Isaiah in clearness of imagery or distinctness of diction. He says: “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

“And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And

the cow and the bear shall feed ; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain : for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. xi, 1-9. Nothing need be said to make this language more intelligible. The state of society is simply the same as John stated and recorded, Rev. xx, 4 ; namely, that of gospel triumph ; when the people of God could say, " Mercy and truth are met together ; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth ; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good ; and our land shall give her increase. Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps." Psa. lxxxv, 10-13.

The early Christians who were struggling up against world-wide discouragement could hardly see how the world was to be subjected to Christ, viewing things from the stand-point of human agencies, and they longed for the second coming of Christ in their day to set things right. " But, as the Gospel made progress, the possibility and probability of a peaceful victory of the Christian cause over all its adversaries by the might of truth and of the Spirit gained a lodgment in the convictions of good men. Another cautious writer says : " By the millennium I mean a period of great length, eminently distinguished for the spread of knowledge and of genuine Christianity, in consequence of which good government will universally be established, virtue will not only be generally esteemed but practiced, and human happiness will be carried to an unexampled height." \*

\* Towers on Prophecy, vol. ii, p. 257

When the eyes of the apostle first rested upon the millennial scenery he calmly, from the height of prophetic sublimity, wrote: "*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.*" Rev. xx, 4. These brief but comprehensive words tell the wonderful story. Whatever we make the millennium to be must, if true, find its germ in the description here given, and in what is legitimately deduced therefrom.

Let us consider the salient points involved. First, in the foreground of the picture John saw "*thrones*," the standing symbols of supreme civil governments; and in those ages regal, or kingly government. Secondly, "*they [the sovereigns or supreme rulers] sat upon them.*" Thirdly, "*judgment [that is, righteous administration] was given unto them.*" Fourthly, *thrones* (*θρόνοις*) is in the plural, not singular, indicating an indefinite number of thrones.

Consider, then, first, that civil governments, standing in the foreground of the vision, are the representatives of the millennial age. This is in accord with both Old and New Testament doctrine, as we have already seen in the previous chapter. The social life and happiness of any people depend largely on the public laws and administration. Thus we have found that in their national chants, the true indices of their inner life, they commonly speak of good government as the boundary and source of the public good. Thus, in Rev. v, 10, on an occasion which has nothing to excel it in the Apocalypse till we come to chapter xx, 11-15, they closed the "new song" with the ultimate hope, "We shall reign on the earth." Also chapter xi, 15, they place in the opening strain of their song the national hope: "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever

and ever." In chapter xv, "they sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb" (the song of the saints of the Old Testament and of the New), and close it with: "For all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." *Judgment* here is to be understood in its Hebrew judicial sense of wisdom and equity to govern. The point of our argument is simply that, in the Hebrew estimation, the highest public and social happiness depends on the condition of public law and government.

Secondly, their "*sitting*" upon the thrones is emphatic. It was not for ease, or the display of loyalty, but a judicial sitting, indicating in this proper time and place readiness to dispense justice.

Thirdly, the judgment being "*given*" them (the rulers) indicates their power was a delegated trust in accord with divine justice. It was God who *gave* them power and wisdom to govern.

Fourthly, the plural, "*thrones*," and not the singular, is not an unimportant or accidental item. It is in exact harmony with all analogy. Wherever allusion is made to Christ's enemies the plural is used or implied, and wherever the conversion of the world is the theme it is the same, the conversion of the nations. Thus, "The *kingdoms* of this world are become the *kingdoms* of our Lord and of his Christ." Rev. xi, 15. "Why do the *heathen* (Hebrew, *nations*) rage." "Be wise, O ye kings." Psa. ii, 1, 10. "All *nations* shall come and worship before thee." Rev. xv, 4. It is the governing power of the world that must become subordinate to Christ. Here, then, we have civil governments founded in righteousness, according to the will of God. What need we further to fill the picture of happy, holy life? With these points secured, the highest earthly peace and prosperity to all people must follow. Then shall

be realized "on earth peace, good-will to men." Luke ii, 14. And that the governments were purely Christian is further determined in the same connection, where it is expressly stated, "they lived and reigned with Christ," which evidenced that "the kingdom had come," and, as never before, "his will now done on earth as it is in heaven."

The verb *βασιλεύω*, translated *reign*, always denotes the exercise of *regal sovereignty*, and must be taken in its literal sense here. To suppose a spiritual reigning only would be to contradict the whole connection. Christ will forever reign in the hearts of his chosen ones, but political sovereignty as the outgrowth of the spiritual is here intended. Such language is not unfrequent with John, as, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and *we shall reign on the earth*" (Rev. v, 10); and of the glorified saints it is said, "They shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. xxii, 5.

The reader must now consider himself to be in the sublimest height of the Hebrew theocracy. The civil power that governs the world has submitted to Christ. All, indeed, are not converted, not saved, but all bow to the ruling power of Christ, although with some it will be with reluctance. According to the Hebrew theocracy, by which we must here be guided, both the prerogative and wisdom to govern are given by Jehovah. The king is the viceroy of God. Thus David prays: "Give to the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment." Again, the poet describes the happy state of the world when Jehovah alone should reign: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the

wood rejoice before Jehovah: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." See Psa. lxxii and xvi, 11-13; also Isa. xi, 1-9.

Such is an intimation only of the blessings which come to the world through the reign of Jehovah and his Messiah. Of the ruling powers it is written, "They are priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." "Being like Christ himself, priests upon thrones, their kingly power and influence shall be based on ascertained holiness of character; all authority shall be held directly of God, and such things only shall be allowed to proceed as carry with them the divine sanction, and are fitted to promote the interests of righteousness. Happy period, truly, that shall witness the commencement of such an administration."\*

It is a question of more than speculative importance whether the millennial reign of Christ will be in his visible person or spiritually, as now, by the Holy Spirit in the Church. Two opinions have chiefly obtained as to the time and relative order of the second coming of Christ; namely, that which holds the coming of Christ to be in his personal, bodily appearing, before the millennium, and that which holds it to be after the millennium. Strong and learned and devoutly Christian interpreters have held to either side of this question. Undoubtedly the true doctrine is susceptible of identification and proof. Undoubtedly the material for a settlement of the question lies somewhere in the realm of sacred philology and hermeneutics; or perhaps it belongs to those prophecies, yet unfulfilled, which cannot be fully explained but by the events themselves. But whichever of the interpre-

\* Fairbairn on Prophecy, p. 450.

tations be adopted, the fact undeniably stands that prophecy asserts and describes a period of time wherein the kingdom of Christ shall dominate and absorb all rule and authority upon the earth, and the righteous shall reign with Christ. And thus Daniel states it: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. . . . And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. vii, 13, 14, 22, 27.

It is the office of exegesis to apprehend and set forth the thought or idea which a speaker or writer had and intended in speaking or writing. In inspired writing, "What is the mind of the Spirit?" is the question, the only question, to be solved. And if the highest assurance cannot be attained, the highest probability, according to the laws of biblical interpretation, must be taken, always remembering that it is the *fact* of Christ's coming to judge the world that is the fundamental doctrine; all other particulars are secondary. He that accepts the doctrine of his personal coming to judge the world, and to finish that of prophecy which remains unfulfilled, is a true believer; and he that "loves his appearing," and is living prepared for the event—the greatest event remaining unfulfilled in the prophetic record—"looking for and *earnestly desiring* the coming of the day of God"—is a true disciple. We are living

in the “last times,” and historic events “cast their shadows before.” History is the great exponent of prophecy.

“God is his own interpreter,  
And he will make it plain.”

This question of the literal, bodily coming of Christ stands inseparably connected with another; namely, whether the martyrs who “lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” were literally raised from the dead, and thus, in their immortalized bodies, reigned with Christ. As to the personal, premillennial coming of Christ, the affirmative would stand opposed to what we have already seen; namely, that the apostle John saw no visible form of the Saviour in his vision of the millennium. He saw “thrones,” and those who “sat upon them,” and that “judgment was given them,” but saw no form of Christ. Now, it seems incredible that Christ should be present, visibly and bodily, and the prophet make no mention of the fact. The government was chiefly administered by those who sat upon the thrones. “They lived and reigned with Christ.” In other places, where Christ was seen in vision, John noticed it. See chap. i, 13; v, 5-7, and xiv, 1-14. Why not mention it here? We have noticed the *plurality* of thrones, and of those who sat upon them, but no inequality of rank or power appears among them—which would not be the case if Christ himself sat visibly enthroned. Of course we can not dictate how or in what language a divine revelation should be given, but we may say that it is out of all precedent or analogy with John’s known examples that Christ should be visibly present, sitting upon a visible throne, dispensing civil justice, and no mention made of it. Then, it is inexplicable that the *thrones* which John saw was in the plural number; how many we are not informed, but we know they

must have embraced in extent the sovereignties of the earth.

Still more forcible is the fact that, a little before the millennium and after the downfall of antichrist, Christ is represented as going forth before his followers, he upon a white horse, "and the armies of heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white." Rev. xix, 11-16. This prophetic vision is yet to come.

Now, none will doubt that this representation is figurative, setting forth in symbol the triumph of the Church after the destruction of the great enemy, antichrist. A little later the millennial scene is opened. Is there any more mystery in supposing Christ to be spiritually present in his Church during the thousand years than in supposing the vision of Christ, as conqueror, to be set forth in the same gorgeous style when it was meant only that his spiritual presence in the Church supplied that want? We are here in the depth and height of symbolic prophecy, and we must not abandon the figurative forms of language. The fall of mystic Babylon (antichrist) is dressed in symbols (chap. xviii); immediately after we have the going forth of Christ, "the King of kings and Lord of lords," for universal conquest announced in symbols. Chap. xix, 11-16. Here Christ himself is introduced. It was the opening of the millennial era. Yet it was Christ in his Church, in spiritual presence, leading his evangelical army—his faithful followers, "those who are called, and chosen, and faithful." And here, at this point of the scene, a great victory is given, described in symbolic style. Chap. xix, 17-21. Then came the binding of Satan—a symbolic act (chap. xx, 1-3); a restraint laid upon the tempting power, also described figuratively. And then came the millennium. In the line of such symbolism, such

symbolic representation of Christ, we naturally expect the same in the last as in the preceding.

Christ, as seems to us, will not come in person till the probation of the race is ended, or till Christ himself shall end it.

It should be borne in mind that so long as the door of mercy is opened for the return of sinners to God so long the original commission of the Church, to warn and invite men to return and be saved, remains in force; and this present dispensation is commensurate to the probation of our race. The dispensations of gospel grace and of final judgment—of Church evangelism and of no probation—cannot co-exist. But it is clear that the door of mercy is not to be closed prior to the battle of “Gog and Magog,” or immediately after the millennium. We must not, therefore, call to our aid or adopt any new agencies which supersede or collide with the present dispensation of grace. Civil government administered on redemptive principles is the prominent and fundamental idea. It does not appear that the structure of society is materially altered, further than justice, equal rights, and Christian law and worship require. The millennium is simply the consummation of what the struggling Church had sought and suffered to attain through all the ages. It is the realization of the predictive song, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” It is the literal fulfillment of the seventh trumpet, the outcome of twelve hundred and sixty years of close grappling with antichrist, according to the triumphal song in heaven: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders [the representatives of the spiritual Church] which sat before God on their *seats* (Greek, *θρόνοις*, *thrones*], fell upon

their faces, and worshiped God, saying, “We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged [vindicated], and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth.” Rev. xi, 15-18.

The powers of Satan will “make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Rev. xii, 11, and xvii, 14. Such are the tone and spirit and historic outgrowth of the millennium, and it would be inadmissible to carry our descriptions of that happy age beyond the requisites of these principles.

It seems to have been overlooked that if the “thousand years” included the “first resurrection,” and the resurrection of the martyrs be literal, then the two resurrections, separated for more than a thousand years, would be either one and the same or two parts of one whole, which in either case would be against the context and without example in Holy Scripture; but if they were to be separated, as the Scripture account states, and the resurrections of the martyrs be literal, then the resurrection of the martyrs would be the first resurrection, and that of “the rest of the dead” would be the second, which no one will allow.

It is not to be omitted that the pronoun *ἀντη*, *this*, is in the singular, not in the plural, which determines

the closely distinguishing force of the term. Thus we read, “*This [this itself]* is the first resurrection ;” not “*These [plural]* are the first resurrection”—which we should read if there were two resurrections, or two separate times of resurrection of the pious dead, a thousand years apart.

On the point of the resurrection of the martyrs it is evident that if we construe the language literally we must, on the same ground, understand the presence of Christ to be visible and bodily, and the “reigning” to be judicial, or civil. Whatever we may affirm of the one we must affirm of the other also, so far as respects the reality, form, and nature of the resurrection. Whatever may be our ultimate conclusion it must be in harmony with the general analogy of Scripture teaching as to the time and order of the resurrection, and justified by the import of the language employed. Perhaps the strongest authority for adopting the literal resurrection, so far as the simple language is concerned, is given by Dean Alford in his note on the place. He says: “If in a passage where two resurrections are mentioned, where certain *ψυχαι εζησαν* (*souls lived*) at the first, and the rest of the *νεκροι εζησαν* (*dead lived*) only at the end of a specified period after that first—if in such a passage the first resurrection may be understood to mean spiritual rising with Christ, while the second means literal rising from the dead, then there is an end of all significance of language, and Scripture is wiped out of all significance as a definite testimony to any thing. If the first resurrection is spiritual, then so is the second, which I suppose none will be hardy enough to maintain. But if the second is literal, then so is the first, which, in common with the whole primitive Christian Church, and many of the best modern expositors, I do maintain, and receive it as an article of faith and hope.”

Opposite to this Lange, in his note on the place, says: "The *krima* [*judgment*] can be only in the Old Testament sense as significant of a princely judicial rule, since the special judgment upon the antichristian world has been previously executed. It is highly characteristic that the thrones constitute the foreground of the picture. They are significant of the beginning of the Church triumphant in this world, the visible appearance of the kingdom of God."

The two resurrections mentioned by Alford are, first, that of the martyrs; second, that of "the rest of the dead" (ver. 5), supposing all the pious dead to be included in the description. If we admitted the postulates of the learned dean we might well accept his conclusions. But the sacred writer is careful to distinguish between the period of the martyrs and that of "the rest of the dead" (ver. 5)—exactly contrary to what has been assumed. The martyrs fill up a thousand years: "the rest of the dead" do not appear upon the scene "until the thousand years were finished." This distinction is indicated by the sharp disjunctive particle *δε*, *but*: "but the rest of the dead lived not again until," etc. The transition from what is said of the martyrs to what is said of "the rest of the dead" and "the first resurrection" is clearly marked, and the adversative signification of the conjunction obvious. The sacred penman clearly shows that he is speaking of two very distinct subjects, bearing distinct and separate dates.

Still further, an event of great signification appears which widens the separation and throws the epoch of the millennium and that of "the rest of the dead" still wider apart. We speak of the time of the battle of "Gog and Magog." According to the usage of Old Testament times a military campaign is often represented by a single decisive battle. This campaign of

“Gog and Magog” is of indefinite length, though brief as compared to the millennium. It is recorded that after the “thousand years” “Satan shall be loosed out of his prison: and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth [that is, every part of the habitable earth], Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth,” etc. Vers. 7-9. All this required time, as is also specially indicated by Satan’s “going out to deceive the nations;” their “going into the four quarters of the earth” to rally malcontents, and the hostile army being “in number as the sand of the sea.” This clearly shows that the probationary state of the race had not terminated, but had been prolonged through all the millennial epoch, which also proves that the gospel dispensation was yet in operative vigor and force.

Now, it is after all this that we assume the “*first resurrection*” finds its place and the hour of its occurrence. The sacred writer takes special care to avoid confusing the time of the “*first resurrection*” with that of the “thousand years,” or millennium. He says, specifically, that the “*first resurrection*” came not in “*until the thousand years were finished.*” The adverbial particle *εως*, “*until,*” clearly implies that after the “thousand years” were finished, then, and only then, the “*first resurrection*” would come, which fully agrees with the whole analogy of scriptural teaching. The argument of the learned and pious Dean Alford, therefore, founded on the supposed grammatical and historic coincidence of the “thousand years” with the “*first resurrection,*” is not sustained. The sacred writer evidently spoke of the “*first resurrection*” in order to guard against error in the relative placing of that great

event, connecting the "first resurrection" with the judgment-day and the general resurrection of the saints, as the Saviour and apostles did, and not with the millennium.

Faint are our conceptions of the change in human life and society when the true millennial theocracy is realized. But the theocracy of the Old Testament becomes the Christocracy of the new. Heaven and earth will rejoice when the rule of the divine Messiah shall universally obtain. In the vision of the millennium, as it burst upon the revelator, unspeakable beauties rose to view, but he could only say, "I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." This comprehended all. Christ reigns, and the world rejoices. Christ reigns, and therein is comprehended all good and blessing. No further details are required to set forth the world's golden Edenic age.

As we have said, it does not appear that human probation ends here. There are still the righteous and the wicked upon the earth. (We shall return to this thought in speaking of "God and Magog.") But the righteous are in the ascendancy, and human laws and government are in equity, and universal peace reigns. The world is never again to come under the rule and sway of wicked men and methods, and the Church is never again to be scourged and persecuted by the enemies of Christ. But though all submit by formal profession to Christ and his government, still, as we said, all are not saved. The submission of the wicked to Christian laws will be by constraint, not willingly; by the force of authority, not by love. It is hence insincere, false, and is justly denominated in the Old Testament, a "lie." Such is the Bible teaching. The apostle Paul states it thus: "Christ must reign till he hath put *all enemies under his feet.*" 1 Cor. xv, 25, 27. Observe, he does not say his enemies

shall be converted, but “put under his feet”—that is, subjected to Christ’s authority. So also Psa. cx, 1: “Jehovah said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, *until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*” Also Heb. x, 12, 13: Christ, “after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting *till his enemies be made his footstool.*”

The subject is clearly explained by reference to the Old Testament. The word *koh-hash* means *lie, falsehood*, and when applied to those peoples who hated the Hebrews, but still submitted to pay tribute to them, means a *false or feigned submission*, or, strictly, their submission was a *lie*, because not voluntary and hearty. As in Deut. xxxiii, 29, “And thine enemies shall be found *liars* unto thee;” that is, they shall yield a false, because forced, submission, as captives in war, or subjugated provinces. 2 Sam. xxii, 45, “strangers shall *submit themselves unto thee;*” that is, *yield a false or insincere submission unto thee.* Also Psa. xviii, 44: “As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall *submit themselves [insincerely]* unto me. The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.” See also Psa. lxvi, 3, and lxxxii, 15. Here, then, is an illustration of the universal dominion of Christ. The true followers of Christ submit to his reign lovingly and with triumphant joy; the “haters of the Lord” submit, like captives in war, by the force and dread of penalty. Take off government restriction now, and how many, left to their choice, would remain to yield to the loving precept of law?

If we take the “martyrs” of Rev. xx, 4 in an individual and literal sense, and not in the symbolic and representative sense, we involve ourselves in unexplainable liabilities. First, it would include only a compar-

atively small number who would be called to the special honor of the millennial triumph. John refers to the martyrs four times. See chap. vi, 9; xiii, 15; xvii, 6; xx, 4. Their record is prominent and full, but still comparatively small; small for such a gathering and for such purposes, namely, even to be "kings and priests of God and of his Christ." Secondly, the number, exclusive of the martyrs, is very great, and in myriads of cases as holy and faithful as the martyrs themselves, confessing Christ at the hazard of life, though not "beheaded for Christ," but who "loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. xii, 11. Of this class was St. John himself. Thirdly, there are millions who have "walked with God" like Enoch, who were never called to meet outward and direct persecution, but have lived godly lives, as dear to God as martyrs, who are wholly excluded from the special honors of this millennium.

Add to this that the literal and personal construction of Rev. xx, 4, involves the visible reign with Christ. But what will be the end or object of Christ's visible personal coming and reign at this time? His advent at this time must have an object, or necessity, equal to so great an event. But it is clearly assured to us that all the long centuries from his ascension till the millennial, the suffering saints have rested on the promise of the written word, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world," or *age*. Matt. xxviii, 20. With Christ in spiritual presence they have fought the fight, and gained the victory; "And they overcame him [Satan ver. 9] by the blood of the lamb, and by the word of their testimony." Rev. xii, 11. The millennium itself is the fruit and result of their faithful activities and patient sufferings, sustained by the spiritual presence of Christ, and his effective providential and co-operative administration as "King of kings and Lord of

lords." And now the victory is gained, and the just administration of moral government is confessed in the world-wide anthem: "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Rev. xv, 3, 4. We say after all these glorious consummations, achieved under the reign of Christ with gospel instrumentalities, what is the specific object of his second appearing just at the opening of the millennial era? It is not for the final judgment; this is distinctly placed later on. It is not for special judgments on the antichristian nations; these have been accomplished in the wrathful vengeance of the "seven vials." It is not for the introduction of the millennium; this is already done, and John's vision of it was after it was introduced. The scene given by the apostle was that of an inaugurated, not of an inaugurating, epoch; a completed act, and not one in process of completion.

Besides, human probation was not ended as yet. Through all the millennial epoch unconverted men lived in the earth and mixed with the holy seed. The enemies of the cross submitted to the Christian rule by constraint during the thousand years; but after this Satan was loosed from his prison and went out "to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth." His deceitful efforts were not without their evil fruit. The battle of "Gog and Magog" evidenced a powerful enemy which could yet be brought into the field, and illustrated the deep-seated enmity of the natural heart against Christ and his Gospel. This may seem incredible, that men should still resist the Holy Ghost; but not more

so than the conduct of the Jews who saw Lazarus when he came forth from the grave, by the voice of Christ, and then and there consulted how they might kill him; nor than the Sanhedrin instigating the mad cry of the rabble, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him;" though he had only rebuked sin, and finished a life of immaculate purity and benevolence, "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth," of whom a heathen judge could say, "Why, what evil hath he done?" Nor is the case more incredible than that of stubbornly resisting men of this age, against the convictions of reason and Scripture. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God." It does not appear that the millennial light and motive power for persuading men to accept the Gospel is to be greatly superior than at the present hour. There will be a cumulative testimony and moral influence as the Gospel spreads and living witnesses increase, but not in a ratio or degree to force the freedom of the will or abate the natural dislike of the cross of Christ. Men could then, as now, harden their hearts, and their hardness of heart would be in an inverse ratio to the light and gracious influences resisted.

From all we know, therefore, of the order of events at this period of the world's history, by the latest and fullest Messianic record, the millennium is the fruitage, or full development, of the gospel scheme, so far as it connects with human instrumentality. All beyond Christ will accomplish from the resources of his own power. The millennium is the fulfillment of the primeval promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Gen. iii, 15. It is the fulfillment of promises which reach down to the judgment-day, and the end of human probation. The second coming of Christ, as we read the Scriptures, comes in immedi-

ately after the millennium, and the battle of Gog and Magog, and is described in Rev. xx, 11.

As to the *duration* of this happy state of the Church, the sacred Scriptures limit it to a thousand years. This number of years has been variously understood. First, it has been taken according to symbolic time, a day for a year; thirty days for a lunar month, equal to thirty years; three hundred and sixty days for a year, equal to three hundred and sixty years; making a thousand symbolic years equal to three hundred and sixty thousand solar years. But this is so out of proportion to any and all of the known prophetic epochs that we may safely set it aside without further notice. Secondly, the thousand years have been taken proverbially for a round number, an indefinitely long period of time, which would be more probable. Thirdly, it has been taken literally for a thousand years of solar time; and this would not be without precedent. Prophecy has made its measurements of solar time in Abraham's time (Gen. xv, 13) and in Jeremiah's time, relating to the captivity in Babylon. Jer. xxv, 11-12. Also it would not be out of harmony with the general usage as to the length of the prophetic epochs.

"Hasten, Lord, the glorious time  
When, beneath Messiah's sway,  
Every nation, every clime,  
Shall the gospel call obey.  
Mightiest kings his power shall own,  
Heathen tribes his name adore,  
Satan and his hosts o'erthrown  
Bound in chains shall hurt no more."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG.

THE millennial period is about to close. The long and blessed epoch has fulfilled one of the most thoroughly foretold and described events, and series of events, the world has ever experienced, or will experience, until the resurrection and judgment-day. It would appear to the mind of reason that a thousand years of so happy a state of society would suffice to bring all men to submit to Christ, "the Lord of lords." But the mystery of iniquity has not been fathomed. Against all reason, and all the worth of human well-being, still "the wicked will do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand: but the wise shall understand." Dan. xii, 10.

It must be understood that during the millennial epoch human probation continues. It still remains possible for the righteous to "fall from their own steadfastness," and for the wicked "to turn from his sin, and walk in the statutes of life, and live." Ezek. xxxiii, 14, 15. A great spiritual awakening and reformation was experienced immediately after the fall of anti-christ (chap. xvi, 19), in the opening of the millennium (chap. xix, 11-16), but all were not saved. The victories of the Lamb, however, were so powerful and fundamental, and his judgment so manifest, that during this happy period our Immanuel—God with us—swayed the scepter of peace.

But these years of blissful human life on earth were drawing to a close, and the elements of rebellion be-

coming restless. The tempter, according to prediction, was to be loosed. The Church was to be called to yet another test, and the old rebellion was stirred for another attempt to acquire the dominion of the world. The sacred penman thus records it:

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” Chap. xx, 7-10.

This insurrectionary movement against the Lord of life and glory is called “the battle of Gog and Magog.” But who are Gog and Magog? Are they persons, or are they characters? Are they historic, or are they symbolic personages? Undoubtedly they are the latter, though they here bear a historic origin.

Magog is the name of Japheth’s second son, and he, with Meshech and Tubal, brothers of Magog (Gen. x, 2), settled in Caucasus and the northern sections of Armenia and Media. This was the region throughout which the ten tribes of Israel were dispersed. Ezekiel (chaps. xxxviii and xxxix), thus speaks of them. But Ezekiel speaks of Meshech and Tubal as the “land of Magog,” which is in accord with those primitive times, in which the land permanently occupied by the tribe takes the name of the chief. It is familiarly known to Bible students that the Caucasus, or region between the Euxine and Caspian Seas, was held by the Scythians.

It is not without cause, therefore, that the country of Magog (Scythians) is mentioned as the noted seat and retreat of the enemies of Christ. From time immemorial it has been inhabited by intractable nomadic tribes, which have been the scourge and terror of the East.\*

When King David would describe his imperiled life in Arabia he simply said, "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" Psa. cxx, 5. Meshech, brother of Magog (Gen. x, 2), the representative of northern (Scythian) barbarism, and Kedar, son of Ishmael, the southern or Arabian. Gen. xxv, 13. As for Gog, he is the prince or chief of Magog.

All we seek to establish at this point is that the use of "Gog and Magog" is proverbial, not literal. Their hostile relation to Christ and his Church had passed into a proverb. They hated Christians and their doctrines, and, like those who crucified the Saviour, the greater the light which had been resisted, the more embittered the enmity which sought to destroy his followers.

It is further recorded that, "when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog." This language makes the "four quarters of the earth" simply equal to "Gog and Magog," or the realm of roving robbers. The elements of hostility to Christ are dispersed and scattered over the earth, and "Gog and Magog" are simply this world-wide disorganized enmity to Christ.

\* "The famous Caucasian wall, probably erected by some of the successors of Alexander the Great as a defense against the incursions of the northern barbarians, and which extended from Derbena, on the western shore of the Caspian, to near the Euxine or Black Sea, is still called 'The wall of Gog and Magog.' — McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopaedia*, art. "Magog."

To rally and organize these is now the work of Satan. We are not to suppose that these enemies of Christ are in the majority, or that they are in government offices and position to aid the rebellion. They were numerous but not equal to the reigning saints. It is said, “Satan shall go out *to deceive the nations* which are in the four quarters of the earth.” This evidences that the soldiers and leaders of the movement were not well informed, were deceived as to their power to meet the saints in battle. The “four quarters of the earth” signify the nations living remote from the center of population and of power. We must treat the whole subject as a reality. The thousand years of the reign of Christ with his Church is a reality. The revolt of the disaffected people under Christian rule is a reality. The deceit and subtlety of Satan, stimulating the masses to throw off the Christian government, and set up a heathen or antichristian dominion in its stead, is a reality, and must find its place in history in its time. When mystic Babylon fell to rise no more (Rev. xix, 11-21) and Christ “the King of kings and Lord of lords” rode forward on his “white horse,” followed by the Christian army clothed in “white linen,” to finish the grand conquest of his kingdom, the shattered forces of the enemy still made a last, desperate rally to restore the “mother of harlots” to her lost position—but it was vain. And now the folly and madness are renewed; that at the opening of the millennium, and this at its close. The result of the latter is tersely given: “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”

The state of general society during the millennium would seem to be natural as in former times, except

that the ruling power in the governing department, and the walks of private life, and of industry, trade, and commerce are faithfully subordinate to the will of Christ. There is no mention of persons who have been converted or have apostatized during the thousand years, but we may presume many will turn to God. The probation of the race is not ended, and until it is the faithful Church will stand true to her commission and proclaim "The Spirit and the bride [the Church] say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. xxii, 17. We cannot say how long this period of disturbance will continue, but the revelator says, "Satan must be loosed a little season." Rev. xx, 3.

The overthrow of the infatuated forces of Gog and Magog would seem to be effected by signal judgment, without the intervention of man. The hour is the hour of destiny. The gospel scheme is fulfilled. The probation of the race is ended. Between this and the coming of Christ for final judgment no act is recorded.

"Great God! what do I see and hear!  
The end of things created!  
The Judge of man I see appear,  
On clouds of glory seated;  
The trumpet sounds: the graves restore  
The dead which they contained before;  
Prepare, my soul, to meet him!"

## CHAPTER XVII.

## CHRIST'S WORK OF RESTITUTION.

Dignity of Man's Nature, or Scale of Being.

## SECTION I.—MAN'S DIGNITY IN THE SCALE OF BEING.

WE now enter upon Christ's work of restitution with a view to its final finish, redeeming all that has been said by promise and prophecy all along the ages. “And who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.” Zech. iv, 7. It seems proper to devote some general remarks to the subject of man's dignity and destiny before entering at large upon the resurrection and its concomitance.

The Holy Scriptures speak of the great redemptive work in the light of a restitution; the restoring, or placing things back to their primeval condition. And this restitution is fourfold; namely, first, the restoring of the human race morally, so far as they have accepted Christ, to the perfect image and fellowship of God, as contemplated and designed in their creation; secondly, restoring their external and social condition to a rank of honor, adaptation, and blessedness equal to the capacity and requirements of the redeemed; thirdly, the physical condition of the place or orb which the righteous will inherit, and fourthly, the reversion of moral government to its primeval administration, or the administration of moral government without the proviso of a further offer of pardon, called “the delivering up

of the [mediatorial] kingdom to God, even the Father." 1 Cor. xv, 24. Thenceforward the moral government is to proceed upon principles of pure law, as in man's primeval, holy state.

This is the end of human probation—the outmost limit of the system of gospel grace. Then shall be realized and fulfilled the awful words of destiny—to the wicked more solemn than the voices and thunders of Sinai—"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. xxii, 11. This is the official announcement of the end of the dispensation of the gospel grace and human probation.

The date of this end of the gospel age, or epoch, is after the millennium; after the battle of Gog and Magog (Rev. xx, 7-10); after the conflagration of the world (2 Pet. iii); after the announcement of the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. xix, 7; xxi, 9); after the first resurrection (Rev. xx, 5, 6); after the final judgment day (Rev. xx, 11-15); after the "new heaven and new earth" (Rev. xxi, 1); at the point where the saints, now glorified with Christ, do enter upon their final reward. "Then cometh the end, when he [Christ] shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. xv, 24-26, 28. These great light-signals, with others we might mention, are yet to be realized in the experience of the saints. The kingdom of Christ, as to its aggressive, evangelistic form and function, will ter-

minate; but as to its triumphs, its distinct, human individuality, its grand results, its glorious reward, it shall be as Daniel saw it: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. vii, 27.

It must be remembered that in the redemptive scheme Christ publicly assumes the full mediatorial responsibility. This embraces three compartments, namely, of *prophet* (teacher), *priest* (atoner or priest), and *king* (ruler). When Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxviii, 18), he declares only what is the true extent of investiture of power necessary to effectuate the purposes of God in redemption. When, therefore, he assumes the kingly power (and he assumed it at the moment the plan of redemption was determined) he assumes it mediatoriall; that is, for a period, or until the probation of our race shall cease. The provisional reign of the Mediator marks a new administration of moral government; that is, an administration under a proviso of pardon and upon given conditions. This form of government was to continue only till the terms of pardon were withdrawn, and the probation of the race ended. The eye of the apostle Peter rested on this ultimate view of the divine plan when he said, in solemn admonition: "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must receive *until the times of restitution of all things*, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts iii, 20, 21. Here is restitution, its import, date, limitations, and extent. It is restitution in Christ and by Christ.

Two questions here engross “the mind that hath wisdom;” namely, What is man? and, What is man to be? Being and destiny. Great words these which define our subject. Too little do men consider them. If we are able to answer to the one, we are able to form a proper conception of the other. If we know what we are, we can form a just idea of what we might and ought to be, according to the original idea and purpose of the Creator; because we know from all analogy in nature, as well as from the clearer authority of revelation, that it is the will and purpose of God to mature and perfect the being he has given us by developing the utmost capacity of our nature along the line of our species and his own most perfect and holy law.

“What is man?” is a question asked of old, and sufficiently answered for all moral and practical ends. “In the image of God created he him,” is the signet of his Creator. No other terrestrial creature bears it. We have not fathomed the mystery of this “image of God.” Redemption brings it out in part in this life, and will complete it only in the consummations of eternity. Every holy soul longs to know its fuller import. The image of God! To be like God! Who can comprehend the honor, dignity, and blessedness of this state? It was the longing desire, in their pure natures, of our first parents. The temptation of Eve ran in this direction. “In the day ye eat thereof ye shall be as God [Elohim], knowing good and evil.” Satan knew that a holy soul could not be tempted at once into open and avowed sin; but that if a holy end were presented, with only an unlawful means of attaining it, by artfully covering up the snare of the latter he might succeed. The end proposed was divine and blessed, the means only wrong. The end was so desirable, so in harmony with all her aspirations, that she might have supposed the

tempter to be a holy being, and her suspicions were lulled. "She being deceived was in the transgression." Many errors have stealthily insinuated themselves into the human mind, in the same way, since that event.

A remarkable tribute to the dignity of human nature is given (Psa. viii, 5), "Thou hast made him [man] a little lower than the angels." So our English version, following the Septuagint. But the Hebrew text stands: "Thou hast made him less, a little, than God" (Elohim), and adds, "Thou wilt crown him with glory and honor; thou wilt make him rule over the works of thy hands." It is true that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews quotes the Septuagint (chap. ii, 7) and not the Hebrew; but, as Professor Stuart observes, it was probably because that was sufficient to serve his argument, though to have quoted the Hebrew would have given it still greater force. Perhaps, also, it was because the Hebrew people outside of Palestine were better acquainted with the Septuagint than with the Hebrew. Certain it is that Elohim is nowhere else translated, or translatable, angels. It sometimes denotes princes or rulers, because in this function they represent God, but never angels. What, then, do we make of the passage? Simply this: that, in the order or rank of being, man, not angels, stands next to God. This also is carried out in the same argument from the Epistle to the Hebrews above referred to. The author had placed Christ above angels (chap. i), and now (chap. ii, 9) places him a little lower than the angels by "the suffering of death;" but immediately adds, he is "crowned with glory and honor;" that is, Christ placed our humanity in his person, somewhat below the rank of angels, by the suffering of death, but has carried our humanity, not merely up to the rank of angels, but has crowned it in his person, and as our representative, with glory and

honor, even (as by other Scriptures we know) "at the right hand of the majesty on high," "angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him." Here, then, in Christ, and in him alone, our human nature attains, or regains, its true dignity.

We have not space to pursue the argument, but there are elements in the human nature which represent God which are not found in angels. What is meant by man's formal investiture of dominion over the terrestrial works of God? The idea of vicegerency in the divine government is nowhere found but in the history of man. His government of the elements, and of all living things in nature, is a delegated authority, subject only to the claims and provisions of the moral law.

This original investiture of dominion is given in Gen. i, 29, 30; re-affirmed, Psa. viii, 6-8, and often in other places. "The earth hath he given to the children of men." As to angels, they are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." This idea of government is a title of rank. There are unexplained references to it in the New Testament. "In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" "He that overcometh . . . to him will I give power over the nations." "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them and judgment was given unto them . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Not less than the last quoted passage, in significance, is the

text (Psa. xlix, 14), "Death shall feed on them, and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning." Morning here is not simply equivalent to *early, soon, immediately*. It means morning, the break of day. The psalmist is speaking of "death." There is no morning after death until the resurrection—"the first resurrection"—the resurrection of the just. "If we suffer with him [Christ] we shall also reign with him." "The saints of the most high shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever." These and such like allusions and promises must mean something. The element of dominion is clearly stated as entering into the completeness of the reward of the righteous. Somewhere in the government of God, somehow in the endless future, this kingly and princely dignity will be realized, and the original investiture forfeited by sin will be restored in Christ. It is partially realized in this life. Christian nations, in as far as they conform to the kingdom of Christ, now represent the power of the world. If ever civil government on earth shall reach a perfect standard it will be by Christian ethics, doctrine, and law. Law and government must come back to Christianity and to Christian administrators, in joint rule with Christ. This is what John saw. Rev. xx, 4. The point intended here is, that dominion is a birthright inheritance of man, a component part of his original endowment, restored only in Christ.

The human nature assumed by Christ had a twofold object; namely, to make atonement for the sins of the world, and to take in his own hands, as Mediator, the government of the world. In him the administration of moral government is mediatorial. In our nature he makes atonement for sin; in our nature he rules the worlds. The moral government is mediatoriallly admin-

istered by sustaining the authority of law, and at the same time providing for pardon to the guilty. Wonderful mystery! But in this redemptive economy Christ carries with him our human nature. Both in his death and his exaltation—his sufferings and his infinite honor—he offers man a participation. “If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.” God “raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” Eph. i, 20, 21. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.” Phil. ii, 9. “Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they.” Heb. i, 4. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.” Rev. iii, 21.

We say, then, that the honor and dignity of our nature secured by Christ in his redemptive work implies, as a restrictive act, that which was given by the creative grant—namely, *dominion*. Christ, then, came to restore, to reinstate, man to the dignity and rank contemplated in his creation. The existence of civil government, family government, control of all animals—above all, the mysteries of *generation*, blending in one form of vivification the mortal with the immortal, the intellectual with the material, the moral with the inorganic, all go to show this. No wonder that Eve (the *living* one), “the mother of all living,” upon beholding her first born, exclaimed, “I have gotten a man from Jehovah.” Gen. iv, 1. The idea of “*race*” breaks upon the mind in close connection with Jehovah, “the most high God.” This idea of *family*, *race*, so fundamental

to society and government, is unknown to angels. Our Lord distinguishes the two. Matt. xxii, 28, 30. The idea of race forever marks a new species, and as the analogy of the lower orders in nature teaches that every successive species is an advance upward in the scale of being, so here the correlations of human being betoken, not a deteriorating humiliation, but an upward grade of existence. We say, then, there are in humanity destinies yet inconceivable. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." 1 John iii, 2. "And they [the saints] shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. xxii, 5. And so the sacred Scriptures every-where indicate. Redemption speaks the worth and rank of man. No further argument is needed. Sin only preponderates the scale of rank and dignity against us. Christ only restores us.

## SECTION II.—HUMAN SPECIFIC IDENTITY IMPLIES THE SOMA, OR EARTHLY BODY.

We have given a few suggestions as to man's honorable rank in creation. But another question arises, "What is man to be?" What is that *summum bonum* which is the realized, ultimate idea of the Creator in giving man being? Who can answer this momentous question? We can only advance a little way. If we follow revelation and the analogies of nature we must resolve the ultimate good into the full development of our being and its faculties in harmonious relation to the will of God. If our being is a blessing, the perfection of that being in all its potentialities must be the greatest good of which the being itself is capable. This, then, is the good of our being. In this is eternal blessedness. It is reached and consummated only in the future state. But without now going forward to that inviting future, let us pause and consider one great truth which our statement implies. If that be true which we have pos-

tulated, then it must also be true that the specific identity of the human being can never be changed. On earth, in heaven, or in hell, man must forever remain man, not only as to his individuality, but as to his specific human type. Changes he will meet with in the progress of his being, but not such as to alter or change his specific *status* in the ranks of existence. He must remain human. The original type idea of being, which was in the mind of the Creator when he fashioned him, must remain; time and eternity cannot efface or commute it. It is not relevant to our purpose to enter upon the discussion of what constitutes species, and what constitutes the immortality of the human species.\*

One of the first efforts of evolutionists is to make the word *species* ambiguous and indeterminate. But hybrids and simple varieties are not species. Whether, as we believe, species is a definite force or quality impressed or concentrated upon the germ or monad, we stop not to discuss. It is enough to know that a species is a permanent form of being, an embodiment of an original type idea of creative wisdom, with its own laws of development and its own ultimate form, which cannot be changed without destroying the identity of the creature.

\* "Person," says an acute author, "has now come into use to express a nature self-conscious, capable of introspection, even to the thought of the ego, and self-consciously determining itself."

Another says: "Identity is that by which a thing is itself, and not any thing else, in which sense identity differs from similitude, as well as diversity."

"A mass of inorganic matter loses its identity if one atom is subtracted. But it is different with organic beings. Here the identity does not depend on the cohesion of its constituted particles, anyhow united in one mass, but on such a disposition and organization of parts as are fit to receive and distribute life and nourishment to the whole frame." And thus the resurrection of the body may undergo change without impairing its identity.

When God made all organic things he ordained the lines of species by making each plant and animal "after its kind," to bring forth "after its kind." Here, then, we rest. Human nature, as representing a species of organic life, must retain the essential characteristics of the species while it exists. To change these characteristics is to extinguish the species, and to extinguish the species is to destroy personal identity. The perfection of man is not to develop him into some other being, but to consummate what he is.

Paleontology teaches us that it is the order of God to extinguish species, and to replace them by others, new and improved, but it does not teach us that it is the divine order to develop species into new and improved ones. *Succession* of species does not prove or "suggest" the *transmutation* of species, as has been claimed.

In regard to man, then, his specific identity involves the mysterious union of two natures, a material and a spiritual. Destroy either of these, and you destroy the peculiar type idea of his being; that is, you annihilate his human identity. In this compound or twofold nature he was created. In this personality he develops and matures, acquires his earthly history, forms his character for eternity, is judged—"judged," says Peter, "according to men in the flesh"—receives his reward, says Paul, according to "things done in the body." 1 Pet. iv, 6; 2 Cor. v, 10.

In heaven the souls of the saints, as seen by John in the Apocalypse, were always distinguished from the angels. Their history was an earthly history. They had "come up out of great tribulation," were "redeemed from among men," were "redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," "redeemed from the earth." But this earthly history,

so honorable to them now in heaven, was made in their human body. It never belonged to the soul in a separate state. In such a state they could not thus have toiled and suffered—in such a state they would not have been human. Their present state is “intermediate,” imperfect, waiting to be “clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life,” “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body.” When this consummation shall be reached the perfect human being will be restored. Then will appear the dignity of human nature, according to the original idea of God. For this, says Paul, we are in “earnest expectation;” for this we are “waiting.”

If the history of their earthly life is to be retained by the saints in glory (and that it is most unequivocally taught in Scripture), then those sympathies and affections which are essential to their human identity must also be retained. Not, indeed, in every particular as they appeared in the earthly life, while the physical nature still lay under the curse of original sin, but so far as they essentially inhered in their specific type of being. But this could not be, so far as appears to our reason, without a resurrection of the body, and its reunion with the immortal spirit. I am aware of the doctrine of the trichotomy assumed in holy Scripture before it was taught in Greece. Admit, then, that man has a “*body, soul, and spirit*,” that the spirit or mind is the superior and the body inferior, and that the spirit could exist independently and separately without the body, still it does not hence follow that the spirit could, in such a case, supply the affectionate and sympathetic nature independently of the body. Much less can it prove that a perfect human being could be formed without an organic body. If the mind, or *pneuma*, could retain its intellectual activity, unimpaired, without the

body, it certainly does not follow that the soul, or *psyche*, or psychological life, would suffer no loss in that condition. We know that the psychology of angels is not identical with that of man, for in the great work of redemption, wherein the depth and mysteries of sympathetic life were to be fathomed and comprehended, it was not sufficient that Christ should "take on him the nature of angels," but a perfect human nature; that is, a body as well as a soul and spirit. This was fitting to him (Heb. ii, 10,); it was both a moral and physical fitness, and it was necessary (*opheile*, ver. 17), not only in order to offer a bloody sacrifice, but to sympathize (chap. iv, 15) with our infirmities, and be a compassionate (ii, 17) high-priest; that is, psychologically he could not be a perfect man, with the perfect sympathetic nature of a man, without a perfect human body. We say, then, that a perfect man must possess a perfect affectional nature of the human type, and this cannot be without the human body.

### SECTION III.—CHANGED BUT IDENTICAL.

We have briefly spoken of what man is, as to his honorable rank in creation. We have also in part glanced at what he is to be, in the perfection of his being, and that Christ, from the necessity of his incarnation, has settled the fact of the necessity of the organic body to constitute, with the soul and spirit, a perfect man. The resurrection of the body is also a necessity to the perfection of man according to his species; that is, according to the original idea and purpose of creative wisdom.

But, passing these thoughts, we would say that in fitting man for his eternal reward of blessedness certain changes must pass upon his organic nature. We speak not now of his moral but his organic, or physical,

nature. How repeatedly do the Scriptures admonish us of this: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be *changed*." "The dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be *changed*." Christ "shall *change* our vile [dishonored] body." The body "is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." We cannot pause here to explain these blessed yet mysterious words, but these organic changes wrought upon the human body must not be understood as effecting a change in the specific type of our being. They cannot be radical and specific, but are limited to certain accidents, or temporary conditions of the body, which adapt it to this earth and the peculiar uses of this present life. So Christ says that in the resurrection "they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Not angels, but still human, though in respect of marriage and family life they are equal to, upon a parity with, angels. So, also, the apostle declares that the mode of sustentation shall not be in heaven as now in the earth, for God shall bring to an end (cause to cease, or pass away) both the entire digestive system of our nature, and that provision of perishable food by which the body now subsists. "Meats for the belly [the digestive organs] and the belly for meats, but God shall *abolish* both it [the digestive system] and them;" that is, the meats. 1 Cor. vi, 13. Thus, also, it is clear that both the procreative and digestive organs are not essential to the identity of the body, and, being temporary, will be omitted (abolished) in the resurrection. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" that is, there is found no similitude of it in the realm of material nature. But we know that, though great and un-

known changes shall be made, the identity of the human type of being shall remain, and this identity, as we have said, implies the embodiment of the *pneuma* and the *psyche*—the *mind* and *soul*—in a literal, material, organic *soma*, or *body*, now newly fashioned as to certain provisional and temporary parts, adapting it to the higher wants and capacities of the *pneuma*, or *spirit*, the intellectual part of our humanity. Nor all or any of those disabilities which sin has imposed, nor yet all or any of those temporary and provisional endowments which merely adapt us to our present preparatory life and merely earthly destinies, but that only shall remain which is essential *per se* to our grand and peculiar type of being, as it existed of old, with all its ultimate capabilities, perfection, and uses, in the mind of the Creator.

And this idea of successional stages of the same being, rising as by regular climax to inconceivable honor, knowledge, and felicity, is in accordance with what we know of God's ways. “*Now* we see through a glass, darkly; *then* face to face. *Now* we know in part; *then* shall we know even as we are known.” “When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” The *now* and *then* are emphatic. “Once I was a child,” says Paul; “but when I became a man I put away childish things.” The change was great; his early thoughts, like his early garments, were put away when he became a man; yet his identity was not changed. In both stages he was human, equally human. And thus it is with the true Church of God. It is a unity in all essential points in all ages, but the New Testament type, though built upon and emerging out of the Old, retains the identity of the church of Abraham and Moses. So with revelation and prophecy. From a primordial seed-promise

in paradise have come forth the dispensations and revelations of the subsequent ages. Abel and Moses and John and Paul meet in organic unity in that one changing and yet unchangeable mystic body of which Christ is the head, and recite the universal creed—"one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

But in maturing and perfecting our human nature two things are to be remembered: first, that the laws of growth in knowledge and holiness and in consequent felicity are unchangeable; secondly, that nothing is accounted as growth which is not in harmony with the original mind and purpose of God in creation, and conformable to the idea and model of human perfection in redemption. As to the laws of growth mentally, heaven is not different from earth. Heaven is not a state of mere passive receptivity. There, as here, knowledge is obtained by voluntary attention, by perception, conception, abstraction, and reasoning. The mind must be active, and ideas will be formed in orderly succession, offering new occasions of praise, thanksgiving, love, and obedience. Eternal idleness and passivity would suit only the quiescence and immobility of Brahma, not the heaven of the Christian. As the soul leaves this world so it enters the world to come. Death adds nothing to one's growth in knowledge and holiness. Millions who are saved by pardon from a recent life of sin will enter heaven with less development in the true line of the perfection of our being than millions have already attained on earth by faith and obedience. The differences of progress which obtain here will also obtain there. Some with more, some with less, development, yet all in complete felicity, according to their measure, will be moving on in lines of

symmetrical growth toward the higher and complete stage. But the conditions of growth in heaven will be far improved beyond those of our earthly state. Here we are liable to error, and, however innocently the mind may err, yet the error is and must be a hinderance. The holy Spirit operates only "through [or literally *in*] the truth." In heaven will be no error, no sin, no lack of facilities in the attainment of knowledge or encouragements to holy exercise. Yet will there be diversities as to degree, or measure of development, of gifts, and possibly of spiritual appetency. Then as now, "one star will differ from another star in glory." 1 Cor. xv, 41.

One great fact in heaven and on earth is placed before us as the ideal of all human perfection--the person and character of Christ. To be like him is the acme of our existence, and of our blessedness. "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John iii, 2. And to this effect is the Saviour's prayer: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." John xvii, 24. Here we see Christ objectively only in written delineation, there we shall see him in his personal glory, with our glorified body, and there, also, our perceptions and experiences of his excellence will be unmixed with our earthly imperfections. Our subjective appreciations here are often a truer guide than our intellectual perceptions, but there they will be truer and profounder, and our growth more rapid and harmonious. On earth and in heaven but one rule is supplied: "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ," until, in a sense more perfect than all our experiences here, "we all come into the unity of the faith [doctrine], and of the full knowledge [*epignoseos*] of the Son of God,

into a perfect man, into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;" which blessed and ineffable "conformity to the image of his Son" is the ultimate "predestination" of God in respect of man. Rom. viii, 29.

#### SECTION IV.—THE HUMAN ELEMENT RETAINED IN THE RESTITUTED PSYCHICAL BODY.

A few words more seem necessary in order to make more apparent the chief practical points suggested by what has already been said. We have seen the dignity of man—that redemption is a restoration of man to his original rank in the scale of being—and that this implies his reconstruction, soul and body, after the image of God, modeled in the person and character of Christ. We do not propose to enter into the speculative parts of the suggestions in the foregoing pages. What we have said has been chiefly exegetical, not speculative. We have little occasion to speculate where facts are so rich and overwhelming. We are not contemplating man's future destiny through "gates ajar," if that phrase supposes indistinct vision. Still, with some facts clearly established, it is not speculation to consider them in connection with their immediate sequences. A logical *inference* is as true as a logical *premise*, or an established fact.

For instance, the "new song" in heaven is a song of redemption. But redemption supposes a Redeemer, a previously lost condition of the redeemed, a ransom price, a method and process of liberation. Each and every one of these points is as true as the first. The "new song" then will celebrate and memorialize each. Redemption has a *history*. We cannot forget the *historical process* and retain the *result*. We cannot sing the "new song" of redemption and forget the history

of redemption or the processes by which redemption became a fact and a new life to us. The history of our personal redemption comprehends not only what Christ has done in making atonement, but all the way in which the Lord our God has led us [during our earthly life], to humble us, and to know what was in our heart, whether we would "keep his commandments or no." Deut. viii, 2. Blessed is the man who has an experience on earth which will swell his "new song" in heaven. But will our sins be remembered? Undoubtedly, but not to distress or condemn. The fact and greatness of our sin and sinful condition could not be forgotten without lessening our sense of gratitude and joy for deliverance. The shame, the guilt, the pollution and power of sin are all taken away, the memory of them only is left. It is a mistake to suppose that such Scriptures as: "Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more;" "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back;" "The former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind," imply that no memory, as a mental conception, shall be had of sins after they have been pardoned. The sense of such passages is that no *judicial* remembrance of sin shall be made; that is, God will not remember them with a view to punish them, or make us accountable for them after pardon.

In the work of redemption there is first an *atonement* work accomplished by Christ; secondly, a *renewing*, *sanctifying*, and *helping* agency by the Holy Ghost; thirdly, an *instrumental* agency by the Church. Now, the *instrumental* part is as really the ordination of God as either of the others. But this comprehends what the Church does organically, and what individuals do personally, to enlighten and persuade and encourage men to come to Christ and be saved. Here is a won-

derful intermingling of human sympathies and human influences with the divine in the saving of souls. I am not speaking of the relative worth and significance of human instrumentality. I speak of it only as a fact, and as an ordination of God, which, though purely an instrumentality, is as really a part of the redemptive scheme as any other provision of grace, and one which will be remembered to be rewarded in the day of judgment.

Will not, therefore, the remembrance of redemption include all the particulars of this redemptive social economy? What lesson otherwise could memory teach us? what emotions could it awaken? Can we remember a friend without remembering the circumstances and associations of that friendship? In heaven there will be recognitions of friends and friendships in Christ which stand associated with our spiritual life and history. All that divine wisdom has been pleased to use as helps to our faith becomes an integral part of the history of our redemption, a spiritual property of the immortal nature, and can no more be alienated or lost than could our moral and mental identity. It becomes part of that indestructible wealth laid up in heaven, which moths cannot corrupt nor thieves steal, nor time nor eternity obliterate. And, then, if this were not so, what would become of those lessons of Providence, that "discipline of the Lord," which have interpenetrated our inmost experience and the most delicate texture of our lives? Can we forget what the Lord has done for us? And if we remember that, must we not also remember all that we have done by his providential and gracious aid? We co-work with God here. We "will and do," because "he worketh in us to will and to do his good pleasure." Who will separate these threads of our history? They are a cord which cannot

be broken. We are made thus one with him, while we sing:

"Thou all our works in us hast wrought;  
Our good is all divine;  
The praise of every virtuous thought  
And righteous act is thine."

In heaven the souls of the martyrs remembered their earthly sufferings and history. They knew, too, that their brethren upon the earth were still suffering persecution, while iniquity triumphed, and they prayed for their brethren, and said, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Rev. vi, 10, 11. Here is knowledge and sympathy in the work of the suffering, witnessing Church. The dead in Christ are pronounced "blessed," "for their works do follow them." The great volume of redemption, which is preserved as a precious memorial in heaven (1 Pet. i, 4), and reproduced through the memories of his saints, shall be for the study of saints and angels along the endless ages. There, too, will be explained the "mystery of God" (Rev. x, 7) in subjecting to sufferings his own Church, and the unfathomed depth of that mysterious economy through which they struggled up into "the regeneration" and "eternal life" will be a theme of endless praise. Creation has no glories, no beauties, no mysteries like those of redemption, and when Christ comes (blessed be his name! *he will come*, and "every eye shall see him") he shall come "to be glorified in his saints." How can this be but by unfolding to an astonished universe the great principles, methods, and mysteries by which this grand result was attained? The "books" which John saw (Rev. xx, 12) evidence that great facts and principles relating to the gospel history and moral government were now to be laid

open to the universe. The plural "books" indicates that they related to different departments, such as the book of the moral law, the book of gospel provision, the book of divine providence, the book containing the deeds of men whether good or bad. As to the righteous, their faith had already penetrated these mysteries and received the saving gospel message; but the vindication of the divine judgments before the universe requires that the "books be opened," the records of time, and of each man's life in all time, be viewed side by side with the dispensations of God to man. For these grand destinies we were created, and to the sublime pinnacle of this great glory and honor we are to aspire, "looking for and *earnestly desiring* [*speudontas*] the day of God."

There is a question which we shrink to propose, because it savors of *speculation*. When we pass beyond the solid ground of revelation our mental processes are of very questionable utility. And yet, as we have said, there are processes of induction and deduction which are as reliable as facts or first principles. The question we refer to may thus be stated: How far will the human, sympathetic, and affectional nature be restored in heaven? Allusion has already been made to this, but something more direct and practical seems required. If what has been said on "species," and the immortality of the human species, as a particular type of being, be allowed, and if what has just been said of recognitions and historical reminiscences in heaven be true, it must follow that all that in our affectional nature which is necessary to our species and to our accountability must be immortal as our species. In man's creation God contemplates a race (using the word in its broadest sense), and the race as comprehending families. Throughout there is the relationship of descent from

a common ancestry. Now, how has God treated these relations? As mere accidents, or as fundamental to his plan concerning man?

In the decalogue, after enacting four laws protective of the awful prerogatives of the Godhead, the next, the first that relates to human life, the fifth commandment of the decalogue, is a guard thrown around the family and its relations. This law is in the moral code, the code of absolute ethics, the code irrevocable. The New Testament reiterates it. God intended the family, which is older, and its authority and sanctity higher, than either civil government or Church, to be for the nursery-culture of souls for immortality and eternal life. The results of family life, for good or evil, tell on the destinies of eternity more than all other human agencies.

When, now, we look into the wondrous economy of God in nature, I mean in the natural endowments of the human heart, we find parental love and the ties of the family of a type wholly different from those of all other types of being whatever. Parental love is not merely an instinct. Instinct in the animal economy is a provision for the propagation and sustentation of the animal nature. It goes no further in defining or providing for a higher end or relation. However sagacious the animal may be, the sphere of animal life, and the wants and ends of animal existence, bound the utmost province of instinct. It is, hence, that when the young of all animals reach the point of self-support, the maternal affection utterly dies out, and both parent and offspring become oblivious to all special relation or affection. All local relation then becomes merged in the common tie of species. But how different the parental affection in the human species. Here no lapse of time, no progressive stage of life, not death itself,

can work any change, but all these rather intensify and purify it. This is a nobler endowment than instinct, and clearly shows that the family tie roots itself in the psychological and immortal nature. It was given, also, for higher and holier ends than the law of instinct, even for the mental, moral, and immortal well-being of the offspring. It is true that millions of human beings turn the whole life-current of parental affection in the direction of the earthly and perishable indulgence of the child, while parental pride and selfish vanity and ambition supplant the higher motives, and defeat the higher ends of parental love. It is true, also, that in millions more parental love is not developed to the extent even of common brute instinct. But this only proves the abuse, not the moral end and scope, of this great quality of our nature, just as savage ignorance and cruelty in man proves, not a natural deprivation of reason and sensibility, but their abuse and non-culture. We cannot extend this argument, but let us turn to its application to the heavenly state. We do not believe that families will be reconstructed in heaven after the earthly model. We have already noticed this point. But so far as any light has fallen upon this subject, we may safely conclude that what is essential to our human type of being, and what belongs to or correlates with our religious history, will be preserved. If so, the meeting of a friend, a child, or parent, a loved companion, a brother or sister, in heaven, will be attended with a feeling, a sensibility, an emotion, humanly correspondent to such a relation. These ties of nature will be purged of their earthiness, their selfishness, and will be holy as first intended by the Creator, harmonious with the love of God, but they cannot be effaced without blotting out a class of emotions and sensibilities peculiar to our nature, or distinctive of it; that is,

without altering the type of our being and extinguishing in the breasts of millions the dearest memories of their religious life on earth. "Thy brother shall rise again" is a markedly different form of expression from "There shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust." Why did the sympathizing Saviour say "thy brother" but that he intended to soothe the sisterly heart at the very place and point of its suffering? It would have been less tender and significant to have said, "Lazarus shall rise again." But now the language denotes a restoration, not of a person merely, but in some sense of a tie, and in a sense sufficient to meet the yearning regret and solicitude of the bereavement. A brother—not a man merely—was lost, and that brother, in the person of a man, should be restored. If the thought we intend be apprehended, with the cautions and qualifications given, it sufficeth. We can say no more. When I meet my mother in heaven she will not be a stranger, not be a human being merely, as distinct from an angel—she will be still my mother. The fact is ineffaceable, the tie essentially correlates. And the emotions which our meeting will awaken, while they will be in essential quality human, will be pure, purged from their earthiness, like the "changed" body; in moral character holy, heavenly, and in harmony with the perfections of the heavenly state. Could we blot out the name of *mother*, and with it all emotion awakened by that name and tie, we do not see how we could praise God for giving us such a blessing, and such a help to our spiritual life. Neither can I see how I would retain the noblest and most divinely recognized elements of my human nature. Many questions may arise here, perhaps some objections. We only ask the calm and candid thought of the godly and the meditative Bible-reading mind. We

have endeavored to tread carefully, reverently. We don't "want to be an angel." They are loving cousins, and we hope to see them in due time. But we look for the perfection of our being as the ultimate good—our humanity as it shall be "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"And when Jesus shall appear  
Soul and body  
Shall his glorious image bear."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE COMING OF CHRIST.

## The Resurrection.

THE first act of this unfolding epoch is the resurrection, of which a greater mind than ours has said: "It is not in itself impossible, therefore no man can absolutely deny; it is upon natural and moral grounds highly probable, therefore all men may rationally expect it; it is upon evangelical principles infallibly certain, therefore all Christians must firmly believe it."\*

As in human judicial trials the first step is to summon the accused to appear in court, so the Judge of all calls "the living and the dead" to appear. This involves a general resurrection of the dead. Thus, in awful sublimity, John describes:

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man according to their works. And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in

\* Pearson, on the Creed, p. 555.

the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. xx, 11-15.

That this is parallel to, and supplementary of, the Saviour's own words, already recorded, Matt. xxv, 31-46, is seen by a brief synoptic view, thus:

Matthew xxv.

Ver. 31. "Wh'en the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

Ver. 32. "And before him shall be gathered all nations."

Ver. 32. "And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats."

Vers. 34, 35, 41, 42. "Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father . . . for I was hungry and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, a stranger and ye took me in," etc. . . . "Then shall he say also to them on his left hand, Depart from me . . . for I was a hungered and ye gave me no meat, thirsty and ye gave me no drink," etc.

Ver. 46. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

Revelation xx.

Ver. 11. "And I saw a great white throne and he that sat on it."

Ver. 12. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God."

Ver. 12. "And the dead were judged out of the things written in the books."

Ver. 13. "And they were judged every man according to their works."

Ver. 15. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

But in what form shall the newly raised bodies appear? Shall they appear as disembodied spirits or as recognizable organic bodies? Reason and Scripture must answer—the latter. They must appear in the judgment in their recognizable form as human beings.

They must be judged in the same personality in which they have acted in the probationary state; that is, in their visible, bodily organism. We have no conception of a perfect human person without a human form and physical structure. The Creator only can know, in the reconstruction of the race, what change of the organic system is necessary, and that will be made, in order to fit it for the kindred companionship of the spirit, or soul, and what part to retain in order to preserve and perpetuate the identity of the race. The apostle Peter says of the Gospel as having been preached to them that are now dead, that it was in order "that they might be judged *according to men in the flesh*" (1 Pet. iv, 6); that is, according to "living men," or "men possessed of a fleshly, or material, organization." They must be judged and rewarded in the same personality as when they passed their probation. For "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive *the things done in his body*, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. v, 10. The resurrection of the material, organic body, therefore, is a necessary preliminary of a just judgment. It is no disparagement to the race or to the personality of the redeemed that they are to be clothed in a material body. Matter, *per se*, is as pure in the eyes of the Creator as spirit, and was so treated in the creation, and, so far as we know, it is capable of being wrought into a reflective medium of honor, dignity, and glory, inferior only to spirit itself, to which it holds, in the human sphere, a correlative existence. We shall return to this subject hereafter.

The verb *ἀνιστῆμι*, *anistemi*, the common verb to express a rising from the dead, is derived from *ἀνα*, *up*, and *ἰστεῖμι*, *to rise—to rise up*; and when applied to a resurrection it means *to rise from the dead*. The noun

*ανάστασις* is of the same derivation, and is translated *resurrection*. When applied to the resurrection it always signifies the return of life to a dead body, and the consequent *rising up*, or *standing up*, of a dead body, a reviviscence of that which was dead, a standing up of the body which had fallen. In proving a resurrection, therefore, the fact of a real death must first be proved. There can be no resurrection where there has been no antecedent death. The apostles were always careful to establish the real death of the Saviour before they asserted a true resurrection.

Take, for example, the passage 1 Cor. xv, 1-20. The apostle says: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received how that *Christ died* for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he *was buried*, and that *he rose again the third day* according to the Scriptures. . . . Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Here, then, is the mode of procedure: He died, he was buried, he rose again. The same body that died, and that was buried, the same rose from the dead.

But some denied a resurrection, and the argument of the apostle proceeds against them. He says: "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen." Ver. 13. The resurrection of Christ is the proof and guarantee of the resurrection of the saints. To deny the latter is to overthrow the former. And, furthermore, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then

they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” Vers. 13-18. Thus the whole system of salvation in Christ is swept away, and we are left in the darkness of paganism, and the witnesses of Jesus are convicted of false swearing, and our hope in Christ is a delusion, “if so be that the dead rise not.” Such is the plain and most unmistakable testimony of the holy apostle.

“But”—the apostle resumes the positive tone of the argument—“now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.” Ver. 20. As the “first-fruits,” under the Mosaic law, were of the most excellent quality of their kind, and were a pledge of the fullness of the harvest, so the resurrection of Jesus stood related to the resurrection of his saints as the most precious of its kind, and as a guarantee of the full ingathering of his followers, by the resurrection, in its time. The order stands: “Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.”

But the inquirer asks, “How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?” Ver. 35. The apostle chides the irreverent doubter, but illustrates all that can be known on the point by reference to the analogous, but equally mysterious, facts in vegetable germination. The seed is sown, the lobe of the seed dies, or rots, and affords a delicate nourishment and stimulation to the vital part, and it germinates. The seed dies, then it quickens. The seed sown is embryonic of the identical seed that is harvested, is of the same species; the part which decays goes into the part which “quicks” for nutriment. But now the great point to be observed is that “God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, *and to every seed its own body.*” Ver. 38. All the changes in germination—growth and maturity—do not at all affect the *specific identity*, or *identity of species*, in the seed. Each seed retains “his own

body" without confusion or change. It is so in vegetable nature, it is so in animal nature, it is so with the human nature. Death of individuals has no power to change the species. The "first-fruits" are the same in kind and quality as the full harvest, for God giveth to every seed "*its own body*."

In attempting to define and describe the human person after the resurrection the apostle sets it forth antithetically in four cardinal particulars. He says (vers. 42-44), "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." The word *corruption* ( $\phi\thetaορ\acute{a}$ ) must, of necessity, be taken figuratively. The fundamental idea seems to be *destruction* or *destructibility*. It thus stands opposed to immortality, or perpetuated life, having in itself the elements of decay and death. *Incorruption* ( $\acute{a}\phi\thetaaρ\acute{a}$ ) is the exact opposite of *corruption*, and supposes there is in the resurrected body no element of decay or change, nothing to antagonize the immortality of the body.

Again, the human body "is sown in *dishonor* [ $\acute{a}\tau\mu\acute{a}$ ], it is raised in *glory* [ $\delta\acute{o}\xi\acute{a}$ ]." It is not easy to define the force of these words. They apply to the human body in its opposite conditions before and after the resurrection, and we have no examples by which we could form comparisons. As a simple translation our English Bible gives a good lexical sense, but one feels it is not sufficient. Language only fails us. John says of the fashion of the resurrection body: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be *like him*, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John iii, 2. No doubt this can be said of the resurrection body, but it simply affirms that there is nothing like it in material or visible nature, "It doth not yet appear," etc. Probably the evangelists give the best description in the Saviour's transfiguration on

the mount. Matthew says (xvii, 2), "Christ was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Mark says, "He was transfigured before them, and his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth could white them." Luke says (ix, 29-31), "The fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering; and there talked with him two men, Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory," etc. In the passage before us the words *dishonor* and *glory* are antithetic. *Dishonor* gives the idea of *death, putrefaction*, that which is *repulsive, vile*. Such is death, the monumental testimony of the death penalty. Gen. iii, 19. But *glory* gives the idea of *honor, praise, purity, felicity*. All that is good and great and pure and immortal belongs to that one word—*glory*. Jesus says of the saints in the resurrection: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. xiii, 43. And Daniel says: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Dan. ix, 2, 3. These descriptions and illustrations convey to the righteous the ideas of honor, felicity, and perfection above all power of language to define or express. Similarly the apostle elsewhere speaks of the resurrection as "mortality swallowed up of life." 2 Cor. v, 4.

To resume our regular citations, the apostle says of the human body, "It is sown in *weakness*, it is raised in *power*." 1 Cor. xv, 43. Power is that which overcomes resistance, and is measured by its results. The human body, in sufferings and death, is the emblem of

utter weakness ; in its resurrected state it is the symbol of power. Fatigue now soon exhausts the strength, but in its glorified state it knows no fatigue, no infirmity. The body will be able to maintain, without rest, immortal activity of the *pneuma*, or spirit.

Again the apostle says, “It is sown a *natural* body ; it is raised a *spiritual* body.” Ver. 44. The best sustained rendering is, “It is sown an *animal* body, it is raised a *spiritual* body. The word *ψυχικός*, *psukikos*, translated *natural* in our common version, occurs only three times besides in this connection, and always refers to the lower, or animal, nature; thus, Jas. iii, 15: “But is earthly, *sensual*, devilish;” Jude xix, “These be they that separate themselves, *sensual*, having not the spirit ;” 1 Cor. ii, 14, “But the *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” Etymologically the word rendered *natural* signifies *breath*, and a *natural body* would mean a *breathing body*, or *animal body*, as above. There is, then, a real difference between the animal organization, with its predicates of sensation, desires, appetites, passions, and affections, and the *σωμα πνευματικον*, *spiritual body*, with its powers of reason and conscience and free will. But these different powers are united in their physical organism, one personality, and the resurrection purges that which is in inadaptation to the perfect and immortal state, and out of harmony with “the glory that is to be revealed in us.” Rom. viii, 18. “It is sown an *animal*” body, formed for the purposes of animal life in this present world; but it is raised a *spiritual body*, formed to a noble superiority to the mean gratifications of this imperfect state, and fitted to be the instrument of the soul in the most exalted services of the spiritual and divine life. “For it is certain that as there is an *animal body*, with which we are now by daily, and frequently by un-

happy, experience acquainted, so *there is also a spiritual body*. God can exalt and refine matter to a degree of purity and excellence unknown; and there are many bodies now existing so pure and active as that, in comparison, they may be called spirits.”\*

It must be remembered that the apostle is here answering the questions, “How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” 1 Cor. xv, 35. From chapter xv, 46, to verse 49 he runs an antithetic parallel between “the first man Adam” and the “last Adam,” Christ; from which he concludes and declares that we are not, in the resurrection, to bear the image of Adam, “the earthly,” but the image of Christ, “the heavenly;” that is, Christ, not Adam, is the model of our resurrection body. The language is positive and causal: “*Inasmuch as [as certain as, καθὼς]* we have borne the image of the earthly, [so certain is it that] we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” Ver. 49.

And as to the body in which the righteous shall appear he further says, “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” Ver. 50. This, again, is a negative statement, declaring what the resurrection body cannot be. But it is not the less important. The language must be taken literally. “Flesh and blood” in the animal kingdom must be understood to comprehend the entire economy of nutrition, or those delicate processes by which decayed particles are removed, wastes supplied, and life perpetuated. This, while it prolonged a temporary life, would involve inevitable decay and final dissolution. Not knowing that the resurrection inhibits all these accidents of being, the Sadducees and heathen did not deem the resurrection a blessing, if, indeed, it were possible.

\* Doddridge, *Commentary, in loco.*

The apostle admits and asserts a literal resurrection, though unable to define it psychologically, or by any laws of scientific classification. He asserts the unchanged identity of the race in all these great changes. He says (1 Cor. xv, 51, 52), "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." If these words do not prove a literal resurrection of the human body into a changed state, necessary to a higher degree of perfection, but not in any respect affecting man's identity, it is in vain to attempt interpretation of language as a ground of faith, or any other ground but that of bootless speculation. (See more on this subject in next chapter.)

The Saviour publicly declares himself to be him that shall raise the dead in the last day. He says, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John v, 28, 29. In this same connection Christ had spoken of the spiritually dead. He says (ver. 25), "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." This is a declaration of what was being then already done. But of the resurrection proper he says, "The hour is coming, in the which *all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth,*" etc. The text needs no comment.

The apostle says (Phil. iii, 20, 21), "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glori-

ous body." "Vile body" here is, literally, *the body of our humiliation*. The language is descriptive of the human body in its present low estate, beset with evils and suffering; but which Christ will change, and make it "like unto his glorious body." The vile body and the glorified body were one and the same body, only in its different wondrous conditions.

It has been advanced by some, and with some apparent success, that there is no physical, or bodily, resurrection, but that the words which have been supposed to teach a literal coming of Christ are to be understood in a spiritual sense, as Christ says, "Lo, I am with you alway," etc., is to be taken in a spiritual sense, of a spiritual presence of Christ.

Especially has the word *παρούσια, parousia*—translated *presence*—been endowed with a technical force and precision. Now, we readily concede that the etymology of the word bears that sense; but every tyro in language knows that every word in every language bears more significations than one, and every shade of distinction is, in so far, a departure from the etymological root, and it is the office of the interpreter to determine which is the true signification in any given place. The word now before us occurs in the New Testament twenty-four times. Only twice is it rendered *presence* in our English Bible; namely, in 2 Cor. x, 10; Phil. ii, 12. In all other places of its occurrence —twenty-two in number—it is translated *coming*; and thirteen out of this number relate specifically to the coming, or second advent, of Christ; besides four from the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, which relate partly to the downfall of Jerusalem, and partly to the final judgment.

It is, therefore, clearly seen that the word *parousia* cannot be relied upon as evidence in support of the

theory that the word signifies spiritual *presence*. It will soon be seen, also, that other words from other roots and of definite significations, being used interchangeably with *parousia*, are of equal and identical import. Let us proceed, then, to examine and determine the import of some words bearing on the subject of the bodily resurrection.

1 John ii, 28, "That when he shall *appear* [φανερώω *phaneroo*] we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his *coming* [*parousia*]." Here *parousia* is interchanged with *appear*, both signifying *visible manifestation*. In chapter iii, 2, we have, "It doth not yet *appear* [*phaneroo*] what we shall be; but we know that when he shall *appear* [*phaneroo*] we shall be like him."

Col. iii, 4, "When Christ, who is our life, *shall appear*, then shall ye also *appear* with him in glory."

Luke xix, 11, "They thought that the kingdom should immediately *appear*."

1 Pet. v, 4, "When the chief Shepherd *shall appear* ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

1 Tim. vi, 14, "Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, unto [until] the *appearing* of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Pet. i, 7, "That the trial of your faith . . . might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the *appearing* of Jesus Christ."

It will be borne in mind that our object is simply to set forth, as Holy Scripture teaches, the fact of the resurrection of the human body in its changed, holy, and recognizable form, as the first great act of Christ in his second advent, attended with those external circumstances which appertain to an event so public, so august, and so glorious. Thus, on the bodily appearing of Christ at his coming:

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Lord shall not *prevent* [*go before*] them that are asleep; for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thess. iv, 14-17.

And again: “The Lord Jesus shall be revealed [*apokalypsei*] from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when *he shall come* [*erchomai*] to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. . . . in that day.” 2 Thess. i, 7-10.

These last two passages are from one and the same inspired apostle, written to the same church, on the same subject, namely, “concerning the *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thess. ii, 1. Observe in 1 Thess. iv, 15, the word *coming* is, in the original, *parousia*; but in 2 Thess. i, 10, on the same subject, the verb *come* is *erchomai*, and in verse 7 a “*revelation* [*apokalupsis*] of Jesus Christ,” showing, as in numerous other places, that the words are used interchangeably. Nothing, therefore, is gained in the argument against the second coming by asserting that *parousia* should be always translated *presence*, which is simply impossible, assuming also the presence to be spiritual and invisible. For, allowing that, etymologically, we arrive at the

radical signification of *presence*; yet it is a presence attained by a previous *coming*. Besides, it is familiarly known that in determining the signification of any given word we are always governed by the law of usage, which is against the objection here. The apostle James settles it at once. He says: "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto [until] the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Lord," etc. The adverbial particle  $\varepsilon\omega\varsigma$ , *until*, marks the terminus or end of patient waiting for Christ. He is not present, but expected, and the apostle exhorts to patience. "Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Lord draweth nigh." Jas. v, 7. Can we wait for that which is present? The apostle exhorts to "long patience" in waiting for the "coming of the Lord." Does this comport with the doctrine that there is no coming of Christ other than his spiritual presence in his Church?

So in 1 Cor. i, 7, "Waiting for the *coming* [*apokalupsis*] of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iv, 13, "But rejoice . . . that when his glory shall be *revealed* [*apokalupsei*], ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

This revelation of Christ cannot denote a spiritual presence merely, but stands contradistinguished from it by its immediate connection with the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." A spiritual *presence* and a "waiting for the *coming*" do not coincide as equals. It is absurd to say we are *waiting* for a person who is already *present*, and had been for ages. The spiritual presence of Christ in his Church is perpetual. The language of the promise is, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," or age. Matt. xxviii, 20. But of the second coming of Christ it is said: "For yet a little while and he that *shall come*

*will come, and will not tarry.*" And again, "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the *coming* [*parousis*] of the Lord. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Lord draweth nigh." Heb. x, 37; Jas. v, 7, 8.

Another word is used to signify the visibility of Christ's person as distinguished from his spiritual presence. The word *phaneroo* is commonly translated *appear*, to *show*, to *make manifest*. Thus, as applied to the physical person of Christ, Mark xvi, 12, 14: "After that he [Christ] *appeared* [*phaneroo*] in another form unto two of them," etc. "Afterward he *appeared* unto the eleven." John i, 31, "That he [Christ] should be *made manifest* unto Israel, therefore am I come." John xxi, 1, "Jesus *showed* himself again." Ver. 14. "The third time that Jesus *showed* himself." See also Mark xvi, 12, 14. We quote these passages to show that the word in question denotes a recognizable identification of Christ's person, or human form. In this sense it is also used to denote his personal, visible appearing, at his second coming from heaven.

Another word is employed in various places to set forth the visible, bodily coming of our Lord. The root idea of *epiphanei* is to *lighten*, *illuminate*, and hence substantively an *appearing*. Thus 1 Tim. vi, 14: "Keep this commandment without spot until the *appearing* of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. iv, 1, "The Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his *appearing*, and his kingdom. Verse 8, "And not unto me only, but unto all them that love his *appearing*." Titus ii, 13, "The glorious *appearing* of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The same word is applied to the Saviour's first advent, to open the gospel dispensation, which we know to have been personally in the flesh. Thus, speaking of the divine "purpose and

grace" in Christ the apostle says: "It is now made manifest by the *appearing* of our Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. i, 10. The verb *phaneroo*, from the same root, gives a concurrent testimony. Thus, "God was *manifest* in the flesh." 1 Tim. iii, 16. "But now, in the end of the world, hath he *appeared* to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. ix, 26. "He was *manifested* to take away our sins." 1 John iii, 5. "For this purpose the Son of God was *manifested* to take away our sins." Ver. 8. "But was *manifest* in these last times for you." 1 Pet. i, 20. We quote these last passages to show that the same word as applied to the coming of Christ, whether in his first or second coming, clearly designates him as in his visible, human personality.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

## The Judgment Day.

THE resurrection is past. We come now to the second step, or stage, of the divine unfolding of Christ's coming in regal glory for judgment, no dates have interfered since "the battle of Gog and Magog" and the termination of the millennial period. Twice, and only twice, do the sacred Scriptures authorize us to expect the Saviour to visit our earth in bodily presence. Each advent has its specific object, and both, from the nature of the case, must be of fundamental import—the first to complete the sacrificial and atoning work, and the other the general and final judgment.

The Saviour distinguishes the two, and the authority of his teaching will be best given by the following synoptic view. Thus:

## CHRIST OFFERING SALVATION.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John iii, 17.

"If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." John xii, 47.

"For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." John ix, 56.

## CHRIST ADMINISTERING JUDGMENT.

"The Father hath given him [the Son] authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." John v, 27.

"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." John v, 22, 23.

"And hath given him [the Son] authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." John v, 27.

Here, then, is the difference, clearly stated, between his “coming to judge the world” and his “coming to save the world.” Salvation and judgment—words of awful, and yet glorious, import! And in coming to save the world, Jesus fully supposes and implies there is to be, in its time, a personal coming to judge the world; but it was not yet.

Thirty years after the death of all the other apostles John lifts the trumpet warning to the nations, which has echoed along down the ages: “Behold, he *cometh* [*erchomai*] with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so. Amen.” Rev. i, 7. This prediction has never yet been fulfilled. But it will be in its time, even to the “jot and tittle.” And as if to authenticate the solemn utterance, Christ immediately adds: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” Ver. 8. This is Christ’s guaranty of fulfillment.

The description of the opening scene of the Saviour’s regal character surpasses the power of language to describe. At the threshold of the divine unfolding we pause. Language and imagery can go no farther; words of destiny can strike no deeper into the human consciousness; yet a glimmering light is held out. Prophecy touches the key-note: “The decree is published concerning me. Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” Psa. ii, 7. During his first advent he had declared it as far as was consistent with the distinctive objects and relations of that coming in the flesh; but though he had restrained the disclosure of the fullness of his personality and prerogatives during his earthly abode, he had not withheld the glimmering dawn of that higher doctrine—the an-

ticipation of his investiture with "all power in heaven and in earth." Matt. xxviii, 18. The good tidings of salvation admitted a beam of light upon the Saviour's regal authority. Still, it was only after his resurrection and ascension that the fullness of his kingly office was apprehended and openly taught. Then the disciples clearly saw the import of the saying, that "the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." John iii, 35.

The apostolic age was radiant with the doctrine and praises of king Messiah. He received the investment at the date of the plan of salvation by the determinate counsels of the Godhead. Then, and thenceforth, the moral government devolved upon his shoulders. Then, and thenceforth, moral government became to our race a mediatorial government, being administered by a Mediator, through whom atonement was made and sins might be forgiven. Hence he became "both Lord and Christ," dispensing grace and salvation to those who accept the conditions of pardon, or "ruling with a rod of iron" those who spurn and reject the offered grace.

Forgiveness is a legal term, and involves a changed relation to law; a change from condemnation to justification. The prerogative of the pardoning power, therefore, could vest only in the supreme head of government, and the supreme head of moral government to THE SON OF GOD. It was proper, therefore, that Christ should show to the apostles and the people that he was endowed with sovereign power, "power on the earth to forgive sins." Matt. ix, 6. His word and doctrine, also, are of primary obligation, in their relation to moral government, having the force of law, for Jesus admonishes his enemies that the word that he has spoken "the same shall judge them in the last day."

John xii, 48. Here, then, are the chief elements of government vested in Jesus; namely, that his word is fundamental law, and that he has the sovereign right to forgive sin; the one legislative, and the other the chief judicial function in any government—the power to pardon sin.

We must premise, before entering upon our general argument, that an attempt has been long made, and is now being made, to set aside the doctrine of the future visible, public coming of Christ, and with it the final literal judgment-day, and resolve all those Scriptures which have a bearing on the subject into a "*spiritual presence*" of Christ in his Church only. As this subverts the whole foundation of the orthodox Christian faith we have given it attention as it has appeared in the line of our investigation.

Among the last words of our Lord are many prophetic announcements of his coming again, and various clear and unequivocal parables to the same effect. Among the parables of this class are those of the wise and foolish virgins, and the unprofitable servant. Matt. xxv, 1-30. But passing by these at present we call attention first to the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. It is evident from the language of the chapter that the "*second coming*" of Christ falls within the scope of this chapter. We shall not attempt an explanation at large of this wonderful prediction, but shall give details only so far as required by our argument. Two points are fundamental: (1.) That the second coming of Christ, in his human, visible, glorified body, is embraced in the scope of the Saviour's discourse; (2.) that his coming, or advent, is to be attended with external, visible signs.

Thus (vers. 1-3), "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for

to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of *thy coming, and of the end of the world?*"

That the destruction of Jerusalem, the downfall of the Jewish polity, and the abrogation of the Hebrew ritual and sacrificial worship are included in the Saviour's plan and purpose of discourse will not be questioned. But what of his second coming? Does he include that as well? The language of the disciples in their request of the Saviour must determine the objective sphere and limit of his reply. The disciples ask, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The notation of *time*—"When shall these things be?" the Saviour answers only by the succession and import of symbolic signs and events, which do not fall within our purpose to consider. So also the words, "*these things*" (vers. 2 and 3), simply apply to the overthrow of the Jewish temple with its peculiar Mosaic forms, and hence fall outside of the limits of our argument. But the language "*thy coming*," and "*the end of the world*," directly affects our argument, and deserves our strictest attention.

The word *parousia* [ $\pi\alpha\rho\omega\nu\sigma\alpha$ ], translated "*coming*," has been by many selected as being of special significance—we might say of technical significance—to denote the second coming of Christ. But other terms are used in different places, as we shall see. The word is derived from *pareimi*, which is compounded of *para*, *at*, and *eimi*, *to be*; literally, *to be at or in a place*, or

*to be with or near any person.* As a substantive it means *presence, a coming, an advent.*

From these radical significations it has been held that in all places where the word *parousia* occurs, and is applied to Christ, the signification of *presence*, not that of *coming*, should be given, and, further, it is assumed that in all such places the word should denote the *spiritual presence* of Christ in his Church. This, it will be seen, completely sets aside, so far as the word in question is concerned, the visible, bodily coming of Christ. Now, we heartily believe in the abiding spiritual presence of Christ with his Church throughout all time embraced in the gospel age. We also as heartily believe in the kingly rule and authority of the Son of God, and that there are under the moral government thus administered manifestations, or tokens, of his kingly, spiritual presence and rule. But we go further, and hold that the word *parousia* denotes a visible, literal coming of Christ; a visible coming as distinguished from simply a spiritual presence, a visible coming, once for all, in the end of the world, or “age.” The reasons for believing that the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew teaches this doctrine may be briefly given :

1. The connection and scope of the disciples’ question and the pith and pertinence of our Lord’s reply in Matt. xxiv, 1-3, require the sense we have given. The disciples ask, “What shall be the sign of thy *coming* [*parousia*], and of the completion of the *age* [*aion*] or *dispensation*?” Now, the spiritual *presence* of Christ in his Church was not the point in question. This was a doctrine wholly in advance of the “age,” the comprehension of the apostles. But his coming in his kingdom was exactly pertinent to their inquiry. Substitute *presence* for *coming*, and the difference will

appear thus: "What shall be the sign of thy *spiritual presence* in the Church, and of the end of the world?" Can this be accepted as the true statement of the case?

2. And, then, the answer of our Lord to such a question would appear inexplicably absurd and self-contradictory. It would make the spiritual *presence* of Christ, which is held to be abiding and perpetual, to appear suddenly, after an absence, and the disciples, in the interim, are to watch and wait for it. Thus, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Son of man be." Ver. 27. "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Son of man be." Vers. 37-39. If, then, we make *parousia* to signify simply the spiritual abiding of Christ in his Church, how can it be said to denote the *coming* of Christ as suddenly "as the lightning which shines from one part of heaven even unto the other?"

3. It is furthermore important to observe that in this same connection, the word *erchomai*—indisputably the word for *coming*—is used interchangeably with *parousia*, making their significations, by the sovereign law of usage, equal. This will appear if we place the words in juxtaposition thus:

"They shall see the Son of man      "What shall be the sign of thy  
coming [*erchomai*] in the clouds      coming" [*parousia*]?" Ver. 3.  
of heaven with power and great  
glory." Ver. 30.

"For in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man *cometh*" [*erchomai*]. Ver. 44.

"Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he *cometh* [*erchomai*], shall find so 'doing.'" Ver. 46.

"My lord delayeth his *coming*" [*erchomai*]." Ver. 48.

"So shall also the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Son of man be." Ver. 27.

"So shall also the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Son of man be." Ver. 37.

"So shall also the *coming* [*parousia*] of the Son of man be." Ver. 39.

We cite these passages as occurring in the same scope and connection, and they clearly show that *parousia*, one of the hinge words in proof of the *coming* of the Lord in his glorified human body, and *erchomai*, which is the common word for *coming*—that is, it embraces the ideas of departure and arrival—are used interchangeably, as being of synonymous import, signifying a literal and visible coming. It must be kept in mind that our argument stands upon the general scope and limitation of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, as given in the request of the apostles and the pertinence of our Lord's answer as to "What shall be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the *age* or *world*?" And we say the language of our Saviour is such as enjoins upon us the doctrine of a personal, public coming and appearance, attended with visible and external demonstrations. Of the twenty-four times of the occurrence of *parousia* in the New Testament, the translators of the English Bible have rendered it by *coming*, except in two places; namely, 2 Cor. x, 10, and Phil. ii, 12.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE COMING OF CHRIST.—CONTINUED.

## Day of Judgment.

THE language of Christ recorded in Matt. xxv, 31-46, etc., is very specific: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," etc. Consider here, "The Son of man *shall come*" (*erchomai*). The mention of his coming assumes that the fact and doctrine of his appearing were already familiarly understood and conceded, and so he proceeds at once to the great resultant. He says he will "come in his glory"—in his glorified, kingly dignity, different from his first advent, when he assumed our flesh. "And the holy angels with him"—the highest conceptions of regal grandeur, power, and authority. Then "shall he sit upon the throne of his glory," an act preparatory for judicial judgment, which immediately follows: "and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another," etc. This is not a judgment of nations as such, but of all men individually of whatsoever nationality. The whole connection shows that it is a judgment of individuals according to a purely ethical classification, namely, according as they have accepted or rejected Christ. The ground of judgment is that of individual acts, whether they be good or bad.

If our Lord had intended his words for nations as such, and not for individuals as such, he would have addressed kings and rulers, the representatives of public law and government, and specified wherein they had done right, and wherein they had misled and oppressed the people and robbed them of their rights. We say this would be natural. But nothing is said of this nature or bearing. On the contrary, their attention is called to duties done, or left undone, which belong to private life, and to individual acts which affect humanity in the humbler walks of life, but which have no conceivable application to the administration of public law and justice.

And the whole awful scene is climaxed with the formal pronouncement of their final reward, according as their works had been: "These shall go away into eternal punishment, and the righteous into eternal life." Ver. 6. Nothing can be added to or taken from this simple, literal, and final court scene. It stands, and will forever stand, a monumental warning to the living men of all nations. He that is "Lord both of the dead and living" (Rom. xiv, 9), has here drawn back the curtain between time and eternity, and assured us of two great facts in the moral government—the coming of Christ, and the judgment of the world by him.

Before the Sanhedrin, on another occasion, the high-priest "adjured" (placed under oath) the blessed Saviour to declare unto them "whether he be the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus answered, "Thou hast said [it is as thou hast said]: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and *coming* [*erchomai*] in the clouds of heaven." Matt. xxvi, 63, 64. These words cannot be taken out of their natural, literal signification. They are eschatological in the highest sense. They are

the words of Christ under oath. He will "sit upon the right hand of the throne of power. He will *come* in the clouds of heaven." The coming of Christ is literal, visible, public, or it is nothing.

The next testimony to the fact of Christ's coming—a fact to be realized in its time—is from Acts i, 9-11: "And when he [Christ] had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, *shall so come in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven."

The minute circumstantiality of this record is a marked and marvelous feature. The language is condensed, clear, and emphatic. The ascension was bodily, visible, gradual; so distinct and calm and attractive that the apostles stood "gazing up into heaven" after the Saviour had passed out of sight, and as if to catch another and last view. This simple circumstance shows the perfect naturalness of the narrative. That Christ ascended into heaven visibly, in his human nature, is not denied or doubted by those who admit the credibility and divine inspiration of Holy Scripture. But does the passage clearly teach a second advent? Let us take the items in their order. Observe, then, the whole scene was visible, cognizable by the senses, and hence a proper subject of testimony by witnesses. The apostles were called to testify these facts as a leading theme of their preaching. The narrative relates: "While they beheld, he was taken up. . . . They looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up," till a cloud received him out of their sight. And still they

looked till the two angelic messengers accosted them: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"

The fact that Christ had ascended into heaven bodily now took full possession of their minds. As an objective fact and reality they had the fullest occasion to know and to bear witness. The calling Lazarus from the grave was not better attested as a fact. The crowning miracle of the Saviour's miraculous earthly history was accomplished, which gave a new turn to the thoughts and hopes of the apostles. A crisis was upon them. They had "known Christ after the flesh, but now henceforth they would know him thus no more." 2 Cor. v, 16.

Jesus had foreseen the occasion, and had forewarned the disciples of the great facts of his departure and of his return. Tenderly he had said to them, "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and *come again* unto you. . . . And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. . . . These things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. . . . I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." And in his prayer he said: "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee." John xiv, 28, 29; xvi, 4-6, 28; xvii, 11.

It was at such a crisis, wrapped in wonder and mystery, that the apostles stood "gazing up into heaven" for one more glimpse of their now glorified Lord, when "two men in white apparel" appeared and reassured their faith by saying, "This same Jesus, which is taken

up from you into heaven, shall so *come in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven." Now the question is, What kind of "coming again" will redeem this promise? Observe, it is not the simple *fact* of his coming which will suffice, but the fact and circumstances, or manner, of coming. It is not only promised that Christ will come again, but specifically that "this same Jesus shall *so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*" A simply spiritual and invisible coming will not meet the demand, and cannot be thrown upon the text. A bodily, visible coming from heaven is required to measure up to the fullness of the language, whether we take it in the Greek or in the common English version. To suppose the "going" to be visible and bodily, and the "coming again" to be invisible and spiritual, is to break the harmony of the comparison and disrupt both the language and connection.

That a bodily and visible "coming" is here intended is apparent by the use of the word *ερχομαι*, translated *come*. We have had occasion already to notice the word, but will add that both by etymology and usage it is the proper and constant word for *come*. It occurs in the New Testament about five hundred and ninety times; twenty times it is clearly applied to the second *coming* of Christ, and in four places it is variously translated, but with the traceable idea of *come*, as applied to the second coming.

It must be remembered that, as we have already said, an effort is made to take this word, and all others which apply to the visible second coming of Christ, in the sense of *presence* of Christ instead of the *coming* of Christ, and thus to ignore the doctrine of Christ's second coming altogether. But, in such a case (we speak with reverence), another form of speech would certainly have been used. When our Saviour would speak of

his abiding *presence* in the Church he says: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the *aiōnōs*," *age*, or *dispensation* (Matt. xxviii, 20); or, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. xviii, 20. Such language we can understand. He speaks of his spiritual presence in the Church in the present tense, as being already there. He says, "There am I in the midst," "I am with you alway," etc. But when he speaks of his bodily, visible appearing, he says: "If I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again, and receive you unto myself*; that where I am, there ye may be also." Also, "Ye have heard how I said unto you, *I go away, and come again unto you*." John xiv, 3, 28. Such language we can understand. But the word *erchomai*, *come*, is never used in the sense of *abiding*, but always in the sense of *coming*; embodying two radical ideas—namely, that of *departure* from a place, and of *arrival* at or in a place. For example, it is said, "Then cometh he to a city of Samaria." John iv, 5. Here are the two distinct places embraced in the word *come*—the place departed from and the place arrived at. Was the coming of the Saviour to Samaria proof that he was there bodily before he left Judea? Is the "*coming*" to Samaria proof of his *abiding presence* there? Let the reader compare the passage in consideration on Christ's going and coming—namely, "This same Jesus, which is *taken up from you* into heaven, shall *so come in like manner* as ye have seen him *go into heaven*"—and let him try to fit the language to the notion of an *abiding presence*, omitting the word and idea of a personal coming, and the absurdity and violence to language will at once appear.

In perfect accord with the views taken of Matt. xxv, 31, 32, etc., are the two parables of our Saviour, deliv-

ered on the same occasion; namely, the parable of the "ten virgins" and that of "the talents." In the first (Matt. xxv, 1-13) we notice only a few points: the bridegroom "tarried." Ver. 5. At length the cry arose, "Behold the bridegroom *cometh*" (ver. 6); then, "the bridegroom *came*" (ver. 10); finally the admonition, "watch, therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man *cometh*." Ver. 13. A child could make the application, and no criticism can alter the obvious sense of the figure.

In the parable of the "talents" it is said (vers. 14-30), "After a long time the lord of those servants *cometh*, and *reckoneth* with them," etc. Ver. 19. One of the servants proved faithless and was convicted and punished: "Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my *coming* I should have received mine own with usury." Ver. 27. The investigation is a court scene; the rewards of faithfulness are liberal and final, and the punishment of faithlessness and disloyalty just and also final. Here, then, we have the elements of the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. The language and imagery throughout are utterly incompatible with any other theory of interpretation. The delays, for a time, of the bridegroom, and of "the lord of the servants," coming, in their times, to reward their servants and to punish the faithless; their coming at times not definitely revealed, though sure to occur, all accord with the future of Christ and his kingdom, as fully made known throughout the New Testament, and that they belong to the same class of Scriptures with Matt. xxv, 35-46, which is their proper and majestic climax. The verb translated *come* is, throughout these predictions of the last days, *erchomai*, thus proving this latter to be of the same signification as *parousia*, when applied to the future coming of Christ.

Again (Heb. ix, 27), “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he *appear* the second time without sin [without a sin-offering] unto salvation.” Here the “second time” of Christ’s appearing is distinctly asserted, and the comparison between the two advents—“as it is appointed . . . so Christ was once offered”—proves the judgment after death to have been conceded and undisputed by those to whom the epistle is addressed, and that as certain as Christ appeared the first time so certain is the second to come in its time. But very different are the objects of the two advents. At the first, Christ was “offered to bear the sins of many;” at the second, “to them that look for him, he *shall appear* without a *sin-offering*, unto salvation.” So it should be translated; for to say he shall appear the second time “without sin,” is to say nothing. In Hebrew usage in the Old Testament the same word translated *sin* is also translated *sin-offering*, and it is only by its connection and the sense of the passage that the specific sense is determined. So also 2 Cor. v, 21, “For he hath made him to be *sin* [a *sin-offering*] for us,” etc. The idea of sin-offering in both places is sustained by Hebrew usage, and by the sense of the connection. Putting both passages together we have this doctrine; namely, in 2 Cor. v, 25, Christ is declared to be a sin-offering; in Heb. ix, 28, he is declared to appear “without a sin-offering.” By the first he came by the sacrifice of himself, to make atonement for sin; by the second he will come, not for atonement, but for “judgment.” The one is a priestly office, the other a kingly.

The New Testament is replete with testimony to the kingly power of Jesus, and his coming the second time for judgment. Thus, 2 Cor. v, 10:

"For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The qualifying terms, "The *things done in his body*," necessarily date the judgment subsequently to his mortal life, or life in the body. Again (Tit. ii, 12, 13), "We should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Mark the notations of time: "In *this present world*" we should be "*looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of Christ*." Compare "*glorious appearing*" with Matt. xxv, 31, and Rev. xx, 11.

Acts xvii, 31, "God . . . hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained."

The second coming of Christ is often spoken of as the time of final reward to the righteous, and hence a day of joyful hope. Thus (1 Pet. v, 4), "And when the chief Shepherd *shall appear*, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 John ii, 28, "Abide in him [Christ]: that, when he *shall appear*, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his *coming*." 1 Tim. vi, 13, 14, "I give thee charge . . . that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the *appearing* of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. i. 7, 8, "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. iii, 13: "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness *before* [emprosthen, in the presence of] God, even our Father, at the *coming* [parousia] of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." Chap. ii, 19, "For what is our hope,

or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, in the *presence* [*emprosthen*] of our Lord Jesus Christ at his *coming*” (*parousia*)? In these last two passages, *emprosthen* (*presence*) is distinct from *parousia* (*coming*); an incontestable proof that *parousia* properly denotes *coming* when applied to the Saviour’s advent, and another word is chosen for the distinctive idea of *presence*.

Jude 14, 15, “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam [of the time of holy patriarchs], prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord *cometh* with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” The “Lord’s *coming*” here is for judgment upon the ungodly.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE COMING OF CHRIST.—CONTINUED.

## The Day of Judgment.

ALTHOUGH the day and hour of the second coming of Christ and the final judgment are not revealed (see Matt. xxiv, 36, 42, 44, 50), yet an intimate approach to the date is given in the chronological order of events. This places the Saviour's coming immediately after the millennium, and after the battle of Gog and Magog. But after these events—we know not how long after, but next in order—the scene will open by the appearance of Christ on his “great white throne,” when immediately the general resurrection will take place, and the general and final judgment will follow.

How long the period of the judgment will continue we are not told. The sacred Scriptures tell us it is a “day,” which indicates a period of some duration, and a day which is carefully separated and distinguished from all other days. The events of that day are of a nature that, it would seem, would require time. The universe of rational beings will be assembled to witness the judgment of the human race, which, for the moral effect it is to have on all ranks of being, must be deliberative, and with regular succession of thoughts such as the finite mind would require for this most solemn scene. The moral effect of the administration is of primal importance. The universal mind must see and hear the reasons for the facts and motives which have made up the sum and reality of life, and receive

according to that which has been done, whether it be good or evil.

It does not appear that the righteous will be raised simultaneously with the wicked. The apostle says, "The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," etc. This before the judgment of the wicked. 1 Thess. iv, 16, 17. Jesus says the separation of the righteous from the wicked should take place before the judgment of the wicked. Matt. xxv, 31-46. They had no need to be judged further than to publish the record of their Christian life. They had settled their account at the cross, and the fact need only be shown by their names written in the "book of life."

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews specifically states that it will be "after death" (Heb. ix, 27), and others testify it will be a distinguished day. Thus: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the *day of judgment* to be punished." 2 Pet. ii, 9. "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the *day of judgment* and perdition of ungodly men." Chap. iii, 7. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the *judgment of the great day*." Jude 6. "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the *day of judgment* than for that city." Mark vi, 11. "Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof *in the day of judgment*." Matt. xii, 36. "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing and his kingdom*," etc. 2 Tim. iv, 1. "And he commanded us to

preach unto the people, and to testify that it was he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Acts x, 42. "Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained," etc. Acts xvii, 31. These, and such like forms of speech, freely declare that the judgment of men, with a purpose of immediate execution of sentence, will occur only in the eternal state immediately beyond the resurrection. All sufferings and inflictions in this life are but disciplinary; the judgment of this day alone is retributive and final.

The necessity of a judgment-day lies back in the exigency of moral government, as it now is, administered under a proviso of pardon. The very notion of a probationary state, such as is now given to man, implies forbearance toward offenders and a temporary suspension of exact justice. And this suspension of full justice, or penalty, may seem to result from indifference as to the iniquity of offense, or the fixed purpose of God to uphold his law. But to execute justice immediately upon violation of law would be to set aside the provisions of grace, annul the idea of probation, and render nugatory the entire probationary, or gospel, scheme. In this state of things God, the righteous Judge, gives full assurance that the penalty, though suspended for a time for gracious purposes, will surely be inflicted upon all those who reject the offers of mercy and forgiveness, and that, in pursuance of the plan of salvation, a day of judgment is appointed, for the adjudication of human conduct, in which a just judgment will be rendered to every man according to his works. To deny a day of judgment, therefore, is to deny the only and sufficient means by which man's accountability can be sustained, and the just Judge

can vindicate his ways with man, and show to the universe the rectitude of the divine Saviour in the support of moral government.

For what is moral accountability but a full and just liability for one's acts, and their consequences, as judged by the law of God? Now, to say that there is no day of judgment in which all acts or doings are to be justly adjudged is to say there is no provision in the knowledge of man for calling men to such account. To say that such a provision is made, and realized in the present state and constitution of things, is to contradict the most patent fact in the world's history. To say that men will have a probation in the future life, and there obtain forgiveness, is begging the question. And who can tell if a second trial will succeed where the first has failed? And who can tell whether there is any future probation? The Bible gives no authority for such a belief. On that theory the souls of the wicked are to be kept on probation till they repent and obtain pardon. But who can tell if they will ever repent? And if not, they will certainly never be called to judgment; that is, they will never be called to give account of their sins. If the opportunity and advantages for repentance and reconciliation are no better there than here and now, the results will prove no better than in this life. If the advantages will be better then than now, it follows that the divine Lawgiver offers a premium to men to "neglect the great salvation" till after death; for the sin of rejecting Christ here will be rewarded by better conditions there; and all this by virtue of a government provision.

But we turn from these profitless, not to say blasphemous, speculations, and say, with Peter, "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are [now] dead, that they might be judged according to

men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer." 1 Pet. iv, 6, 7. And Jude 14, 15: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

The second coming of Christ is not for partial ends, but for the consummation of the great scheme of redemption in all its breadth and wondrous departments. "He does not come only to conclude the preaching of the Gospel, but also to close the duration of the world —to transform the world of faith, in which dwelleth righteousness and blessedness, into a world of sight, to awaken the dead, to judge the living and the dead, and to conduct the children of God to the inheritance of eternal bliss."\*

As men shall be found to have spurned mercy they will fall back under the penal claim of law, and simple justice will take its course; and "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb. x, 31.

The execution of penalty is the most solemn act of government, and hence in all well-regulated human governments the process of trial and condemnation is conducted with the greatest formality, impartiality, and care. The day and hour of trial are carefully appointed; the accused is brought into court, confronting the accusation; facts are searched out, and the law carefully examined and applied. All other business is suspended to the fullest extent necessary to the justice of the final decision of the case. By all principles of just government known to man, and by all declarations of Holy

\*Nitzsch's *System of Christian Doctrine*, p. 386.

- Scripture, those who have refused obedience to law must be judged only by law. If the precept of law be violated the penalty of law must be inflicted. If they have rejected the only provision for pardon and reconciliation in Christ, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. x, 26, 27. This is the course of justice, and it is inevitable. There could be no just government without it.

But just here we are met with another requisite of salutary administration: the whole process must be public. Not only must the administration be just, but it must be openly known and confessed to be just. In order to this it must be public. Men must know the steps taken, and the result attained, and in their own spontaneous moral consciousness must approve them. Thus, and only thus, could the moral support of just government be attained and established. And thus, also, are men warned, and restrained from transgression, and the exemplariness of judicial proceedings, so essential to the moral force of government, secured. The deterrent influence of penalty is a chief end of penalty.

But the present administration of moral government, during man's probationary state, does not exhibit the solemnities of a judicial trial and execution. Men are careless in sin, and open and persistent in transgression. The current lives and conduct of transgressors give no adequate evidence of the accountability of man nor the terrors of a judgment-scene. The sin of yesterday is, in the face of moral law, repeated to-day. Men are jovial and jubilant and careless and blasphemous, despising the claims of religion and the restraints of divine warnings. "They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. . . . And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in

the Most High? Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world." Psa. lxxiii, 9-12. Sage men, and holy, have paused at this point and, like the prophet, asked, "Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?" Jer. xii, 1. Not only are wicked men often prosperous, but they prosper because they are wicked and choose wicked devices; and the righteous suffer because they are righteous and choose and practice the will of God. The inequality of rewards and punishments under the present mediatorial administration of moral government, without an assurance of a future judgment-day, in which perfect justice shall be meted out to every human being, would leave an inefaceable reproach upon "the Judge of all the earth." The redemptive plan gives to man a new probation, and this involves the suspension of penalty for a season, and, by the laws of free agency, it involves also the possibility of wrong-doing and rebellion against both law and grace. Instant punishment would soon deter transgressors, or sweep them from the earth. But "because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Eccl. viii, 11.

To deny, therefore, the doctrine of a future judgment-day is to deny, by necessary sequence, the doctrine of human accountability, for there is left no other tribunal to admeasure sin, adjudge guilt, and enforce punishment.

The Holy Scriptures abound in warnings and in asseverations of a future government, and that Christ shall be the Judge. Christ himself thus states the solemn fact: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats: and

he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was a hungered and ye fed me. . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat," etc. Matt. xxv, 31-42.

This passage we have already quoted, but for other purposes than the present; namely, to show the externality and visibility of Christ's appearing; this, to show his kingly and judicial authority. We are not to suppose that the statement, "Before him shall be gathered all nations," etc., was a call to judgment of the nations *as such*, and therefore distinct from the individual judgment of the last day. The classification is according to individual character, according to individual acceptance or rejection of Christ, and the rewards of punishments are personal and final. Nothing less than this could answer to the descriptions given. The *τότε, then*, connects with *ὅταν, when*, in the first member of the verse: "When the Son of man shall come, . . . then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." The "throne of his glory," upon which he shall sit, immediately follows his "coming, [erchomai] in his glory"—a description purely eschatological. The first coming was "in the form of a servant," and "in fashion like a man." Phil. ii, 7, 8. The second shall be "in his glory, and all the holy angels with him." In the first he suffered, died, and made priestly atonement for sin; in the second "he shall sit upon the throne of his glory" for the judgment of the world. He does not give the solar day or date of his coming, but "when" he shall come, "then" shall he appear in his regal and judicial sovereignty.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## CHRIST'S CARE OF HIS OWN ELECT.

## The Intermediate State.

IN the brief statements which we purpose to make on this subject we shall not attempt formal proof against the Sadducean doctrine that there is no angel, spirit, or resurrection ; nor against the unscriptural and absurd notion that the soul sleeps in unconsciousness between death and the resurrection. If the proof in support of the truth shall be adequate, the error falls to the ground. We shall assume that the soul is immortal, and that it continues in self-conscious existence apart from the body, as in connection with it.

The intermediate state, as it is called, is the state, situation, or condition of souls between death and the resurrection and final judgment. Where do the departed souls of the righteous and the wicked go, and what are the circumstances of their being, are questions belonging strictly to the sphere of eschatology. There is a distinction between the intermediate *state*, and the intermediate *place*, of departed souls. The simple *ubi*, or *where* of the soul is of secondary importance; the *moral condition* is of infinite moment. But the righteous, dying, go to a place prepared and suitable to their character; so also of the wicked. Heaven is not only a place, but a state as well; so also is it with the wicked. The character determines the place in either case; and it may be constantly and confidently assumed that whatever may be said of the con-

dition of the righteous, the condition of the wicked must be its opposite, both as to place and character.

The place of this intermediate state of the dead was called by the Hebrews *sheohl*, which signifies *a pit, the grave, under-world*, region of the dead. It is used in all these senses, and as a receptacle of the dead it was supposed to be situated under the world—a deep and shadowy region. The Greeks called it *hades*, a word derived from *a*, privative, and *eido*, *to see; not to see, unseen*, that is, *the unseen world*, the world I do not see. This *hades* they divided into two compartments; one was called *elysium*, and the other *tartarus*. The latter word occurs in 2 Pet. ii, 4, where it is translated “hell.” The school-men added several other divisions of *hades*, but the two mentioned are sufficient to represent the supposed doctrine of an intermediate place. This doctrine is held by the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, and in general by the denominations of the Protestant family. It is not in all cases, however, held as a dogma except in the Romish Church, but is generally admitted, with full liberty of dissent. It is not, moreover, held that the two classes of good and evil spirits mingle together in *hades*, but that they remain widely apart, according to their degree of moral fitness or unfitness for heavenly or penal rewards.

But the doctrine of the intermediate place, however plausible, is a derivation of pagan mythology, not of Holy Scripture. The rapid spread of the Gospel among heathen and Jewish nations brought into the Christian Church a mass of mind tinctured with heathen philosophy; men who held the doctrine, philosophers and uneducated minds alike, that those who die unprepared for a blissful reward were detained in *hades* until purified and fit for the abodes of the blessed. The Christian religion greatly modified and corrected the error, but

did not fully dispel it. The Jews themselves held to the doctrine of prayer and sacrifice for the dead. At length, five hundred years after the apostle John, who taught widely different, Gregory the Great foisted the belief into dogma, and it became thenceforward incorporated in the creed of the Christian Church. "He was the first writer [A. D. 590] who clearly propounded the idea of a deliverance from purgatory by intercessory prayer, and by masses for the dead, that they might obtain forgiveness and fitness for final judgment." \*

An instance occurred one hundred and sixty years before Christ which illustrates the drifting of the Jewish mind from the Old Testament standard toward heathenism, as a natural result of speculations on the intermediate state of the dead. It is recorded 2 Macc. xii, 43-45, that after a battle in which the Jews were victorious they turned back to bury their dead, and found on their inner garments the images of idolatry, whereupon they sent two thousand drachms of silver (equal to three hundred dollars) to Jerusalem for a sin-offering for the dead, to which also intercessory prayer was added; and the account adds: "It is, therefore, a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sin." To which the translator of the Douay Bible (Roman Catholic) adds: "Here is an evident and undeniable proof of the practice of praying for the dead under the old law, which was still strictly observed by the Jews, and consequently could not be introduced at that time, if it had not always been their custom." The Council of Trent, A. D. 1545, having incorporated the Apocryphal books and the traditions of the Christian fathers into the sacred canon, "as of equal authority with the Old and New Testaments," may now find in their Bible thus enlarged proof of an

\* Hagenbach's *Hist. Doctr.* vol. 1, p. 375.

intermediate state, with its purgatory and prayers and sacrifices for the dead.

But Protestants have no occasion for making a new Bible in order to defend a doctrine which is of heathen origin. The doctrine of an intermediate place is still largely admitted, and though it has always been held by the papists in the interests of the further doctrine of prayer and masses for the dead, and though this is its logical outcome, yet Protestants almost universally disavow this conclusion.

That the full rewards of both good and evil will not be given till the resurrection and final judgment is clearly taught in Scripture. Reason teaches the same; for if human accountability be just and true, then men are held liable for their acts, and for the consequences of their acts, commensurate to the limit of their understanding. Now, it is clear enough that the good or evil consequences of human action do outlive the earthly life of the actor, and that men who know that they act under this liability do nevertheless act with culpable indifference to it, and often with direct intention that the posthumous consequences of their acts shall pass over into that future state for judgment. It would, therefore, be mockery of reason and of justice to ignore these facts and assume that men are judged and rewarded immediately upon their death, and in this light an intermediate state becomes a necessity of government. The final rewards must be given only when the aggregate sum of human responsibility is ascertained—that is, at the final judgment. But this does not necessitate a middle place for their reception, but only an intermediate state congenial to their moral character.

The Bible teaches us that there are two, and only two, receptacles of souls beyond the grave, or after death; one the abode of the righteous, the other the abode

of the wicked. Thus, "Broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction . . . Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life." Matt. vii, 13, 14. "The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom : the rich man also died, and was buried; and in *hades* he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." Luke xvi, 22, 23.

The Holy Scriptures are rich and replete in the assurances they give that the righteous go directly, after their decease, to the final abodes of the blessed. So Phil. i, 23, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to *depart and to be with Christ*, which is far better." And again (2 Cor. v, 6-8): "Therefore we are always confident, *knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord*: . . . we are confident, I say, and *willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*." This language cannot be mistaken. Rev. xiv, 13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." These are blessed "*henceforth*;" that is, immediately, from the moment of dying and onward without limit of time.

When our Lord said to the dying penitent thief, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in *paradise*" (Luke xxiii, 43), he did not say, "To-day shalt thou be with me in *hades*," or "the region of the dead," or "the place of departed spirits," as distinct from heaven. Paradise is well known, in the New Testament usage, as the place of blessedness; equal in import to "*heaven*;" not as limbus or *hades*, but as the place of the presence and throne of God. In Rev. ii, 7, the ultimate bliss of reward is thus stated: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life,

*which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*" This "tree of life" which is "in the midst of the paradise of God" is also, in chapter xxii, 2, represented as being by the river of life in the city New Jerusalem (described chapter xxi), with all other accompaniments of the final blessedness. Language cannot be more specific.

So, also, when the apostle Paul described the wonderful visions with which God has favored him, he said he was "caught up into the third heaven," caught up, he says, to "paradise" (2 Cor. xii, 2, 4), using "paradise" and the "third heavens" interchangeably, as of equal import, and making paradise the seat of his revelations.

When John was about to receive his first revelations of the prophetic future he was first permitted to behold how the saints worshiped and gave thanks, that "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, had prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Rev. v, 5. All heaven was summoned to be present and celebrate the gladsome hour. And the saints were there: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. v, 9, 10. Then followed "the voice of many angels round the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," etc. Vers. 11-14. Here, then, we find the whole company of the saints who had died since man was created upon the earth, present, with God and the Lamb and

all the companies of heavenly beings, to celebrate the opening of the “book” of the yet unfulfilled prophecy relating to the Church and the consummation of the redemptive economy. The saints were in their proper place in heaven, and round about the “throne,” not in hades, or any intermediate place.

In Rev. vi, 9-11, we are introduced to a melancholy scene—“the era of the martyrs.” The sacred penman thus records it: “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”

This flying to the altar for protection and justice is an ancient custom. See Exod. xxi, 14; 1 Kings i, 50; ii, 28. Like the cities of refuge, it was an appeal to God against all violence and injustice in the administration of law, and for mercy and protection if the act might be forgiven. The souls of the martyrs, by an allegory, bring their cause directly before God. There, at the foot of the altar—probably the altar of incense within the veil—they plead, prostrate, with God, against the wasting violence of persecution. We can only call attention to the fact that the souls of the martyrs were not in hades, or any intermediate section of the world, but in the holy tabernacle of God, before his presence. The altar and tabernacle were never in hades. If we were to speak as to the historic time of the “fifth seal,” we should place it in the reign of Diocletian and

some of his successors, beginning soon after his accession to the throne (A. D. 284), and continuing ten years. It was the bloodiest of all the Gentile persecutions, and it was the last, as we shall show immediately. God had said to his beloved and faithful martyrs, "Rest yet for a little season," and it proved only a little season.

The seventh chapter of Revelation is an episode between the first six seals, past, and the seventh seal, or its seven trumpets, yet to come. If we were to give its chronological position, we should say the sixth seal terminates in the downfall of the pagan government and religion in the Roman Empire by the decree of Constantine the Great A. D. 313. It was a period of unprecedented mental activity, commotion, and, on the part of the heathen, of distress and wailing. Read Rev. vi, 12-17. Not only was the political power of the empire to persecute the Church gone forever, but the Roman government was declared to be Christian. It was not, however, till ninety-seven years afterward —namely, A. D. 410—that paganism, as a religious organization in the empire, was exterminated. But to return to our argument. The sealing of the saints—God's mark of recognition and protection—being accomplished (vers. 3, 4), the Church again comes to our notice. John says, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshiped God, saying, Amen: Bless-

ing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. . . . For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water," etc. Rev. vii, 9-17.

Here, then, the Church appears in her glory, with the heavenly beings worshiping God. It was "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues;" that is, not a select number, but the entire body of the redeemed; and it is impossible to give any pertinence or meaning to the clear and full and oft-repeated notations of place and condition of the saints—such as, "They stood before the throne and before the Lamb;" "they stood before the throne;" "therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. . . . For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." We say it is impossible to give any pertinence or meaning to this language, as describing the place and condition of the redeemed saints, on the hypothesis of an intermediate place in hades. They are distinguished from the angels, for "they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

In chapter viii the seventh seal is opened, and is divided into seven trumpets, or subperiods. Four of these trumpet periods are compressed in the eighth chapter, and reach to about A. D. 476, the date of the downfall of the western branch of the Roman Empire. Two of the remaining trumpet periods find their dates in the first one hundred and forty years of the Saracenic or Mohammedan wars, beginning with the first declaration of war by Mohammed, A. D. 622, and ending A. D. 756. At the latter date we open chapter x to chapter xviii as the period and downfall of antichrist, followed by the millennium.

The reader will keep in mind that the direct line of our argument leads us to present the Scripture statements of the place of abode of the dead between death and the final judgment.

In chap. xii, 10, it is said: "I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." Although it is not said that the united Church gave forth this announcement, yet it was in behalf of the Church, and by one of the members of the Church, that it was done. Hence he calls the redeemed "our brethren." "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them." There would be no pertinence in thus speaking to and for the Church if they were not present in "heaven." And thus it is also said, in chapter xi, 16-19, that "the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats," who were the representatives of the Church, worshiped and gave thanks, that God had now openly entered into judgment with the nations, "and that he would give reward unto his servants the prophets, and to the saints," etc. We say the whole body of the

saints are supposed to be present in heaven to hear and join in the service.

In Rev. xiv, 1-5, we have the Church assembled with the Lamb on Mount Zion. "And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, . . . and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. . . . And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Here also is the place of the gathering carefully noted; they were on "Mount Zion," the spiritual Mount Zion, which is in "the Jerusalem which is above," and "before the throne."

Similar to this is the vision of Rev. xv, 1-5. The scene is laid in the temple, within the first veil, as the "sea of glass" indicates (see 1 Kings vii, 23), and within the second veil, or "holy of holies." Vers. 5, 8. "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

Over the fall of "Babylon, the mother of harlots," we again see the true, and now the triumphant, Church standing in the forefront of the happy myriads, leading their singing and their worship. Earth and heaven will never again witness such an occasion. The apostle says: "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And

again they said, Alleluia. . . . And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Rev. xix, 1-9.

Now, it is indisputable that in all this triumphal praise and thanksgiving the Church stood apart, distinguished from all other heavenly worshipers, except in verse 4, the "four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures" responded, "Amen; Alleluia." The "*much people in heaven*," (ver. 1), and "*ye that fear God, both small and great*;" the "*marriage of the Lamb*," "*his wife who made herself ready*," are indications of a suffering but now triumphant Church, and of their abode in heaven. And in all the many allusions to the Church through all her mighty sufferings and struggles, so faithfully recorded by John, we have found that they have appeared in heaven upon their decease as the place of their permanent abode. Nowhere is there the slightest allusion to hades, or the under world, or any other intermediate place, but in heaven itself, to which the souls of the departed saints go. It is difficult to say what form of evidence could be more conclusive.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

CHRIST'S CARE OF HIS OWN ELECT.—CONTINUED.

## The Intermediate State.

In continuance of the argument against a separate intermediate state and place it may be asked, Did not Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost quote Christ prophetically as saying, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades?” In reply to this question we observe: first, the word *hades* occurs eleven times in the New Testament; in three places it may properly be understood to denote the place of future punishment—namely, Matt. xi, 23; Luke x, 15, and xi, 23. In one place it is translated “grave” (1 Cor. xv, 55)—“O grave, where is thy victory?” In five places it is translated “hell” where the sense is obviously “grave,” or the region of death; namely, Matt. xvi, 18; Rev. i, 18, and vi, 8, and xx, 13, 14. The two remaining, namely, Acts ii, 27, 31, are those in question, and which we understand to signify the *grave*, or the region of the dead, the region over which death reigns; “the place and receptacle of the dead;” and we thus understand it for the following reasons: First, it is in accord with the sense given by Greek classic and Septuagint usage, and the Hebrew usage of *sheol*, which it everywhere represents. Secondly, to suppose that Christ went to hell, or to purgatory, is simply shocking and blasphemous. Thirdly, the scope and connection of Acts ii, 27, 31 simply restricts the meaning of *hades* to the word *grave*; the entombment of the Saviour. The word translated “soul” ( $\psi\chi\eta$ ) often takes its sense of *life*,

which exactly suits the point of Peter's argument. The original form is poetical, and by giving the distich in full it will be seen that it is a synonymous parallelism requiring this sense, thus:

"Thou wilt not abandon my life in the grave,  
Neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."

It will be readily seen, therefore, that the apostle is not speaking of Christ's soul, but of his body; that it was not left, or abandoned, in the grave till it saw corruption, and so has no reference whatever to the human soul of the Saviour. It cannot, therefore, offer any proof that Christ went to hades, or the supposed place of departed spirits, or anywhere else but to paradise, as he promised the penitent thief (Luke xxiii, 43), "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The original text (Psa. xvi, 10) fully sustains this view. Peter quotes it verbatim, only using Hebrew words instead of Greek. David prophetically speaks of Christ as saying, "Thou wilt not forsake my soul to, or in, sheol." Sheol here, as often, simply means *grave*, or region of the dead. The Hebrew word *nephesh*, translated *soul*, is often used pronominally for *person*, *self*, *me*, and with a suffix signifies *myself*, etc., as, "All the *souls* that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy *souls*;" that is, *persons*. "According to the number of your *persons*," Hebrew, *souls*. "Whosoever hath killed *any person*," Hebrew, hath killed any *soul*. "Many say of *me*," Hebrew, of *my soul*. "Say unto my *soul*;" that is, say unto *me*. See Exod. i, 5, and xvi, 16; Num. xxxi, 3; Psa. iii, 2, and xxxv, 3. Such examples are numerous. They are simply Hebraic forms, the same in signification whether in English, Greek, or Hebrew. It is, therefore, in perfect harmony with usage to read the original passage in question as we have read Peter's

quotation, simply, “Thou wilt not leave *me* [myself] in the *grave*,” etc. And all efforts to press the language into support of an intermediate place are as unauthorized and absurd as the theory of purgatory itself.

The passage of 1 Pet. iii, 19, 20, has been pressed into the support of an intermediate state of souls, and of the belief that Christ went down into the under world among “the spirits” of the dead, and there preached, or published, redemption to the lost. The passage reads thus: “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened [brought to life] by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.”

We shall better understand this passage by considering its parts separately. Thus: First, the fact of Christ’s preaching to the spirits in prison, namely, the affirmation, “he went and preached” to them; secondly, the mode or method of his preaching, namely, “by which [Spirit] he went and preached,” etc.; thirdly, the time of his going and preaching, namely, “aforetime, in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.”

On the second division above given it is important to fix attention upon the true antecedent and relative in the passage. The relative pronoun *ῳ*, *which*, or *whom*, naturally construes with *πνεύμασι*, *spirit*, in the previous verse. This gives the form in accordance with the common version, “by *which* [Holy Spirit] he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.” It would be in violation of just grammatical principles to make “*Christ*” the antecedent to “*whom*,” when the word “*Spirit*” is nearer and more in harmony with the connection and the analogy of usage, and we might also say the analogy of

faith. But another question arises: Does *πνεύμασι*, *spirit* (ver. 18), signify the Holy Spirit, or only the human spirit of Christ? The common English version says the former, giving the capital to the word, thus: "For Christ . . . was put to death in the flesh, *but* quickened [made alive] by the SPIRIT." The strong adversative particle *δε*, "*but*," makes an antithesis between "death" and "made alive." Ver. 8. Thus:

"Christ was *put to death* in the flesh:  
Christ was *made alive* by the Spirit."

Now, if the death be physical, the quickening, or making alive, must be physical revivification. Who, then, was the cause of this new physical life, or resurrection? The text says "the Spirit;" that is, the Holy Spirit. It is against the antithesis to assume the quickening to be less or other than the resurrection life. But if this be so, then it follows that the Holy Spirit himself, not Christ, went and preached to the spirits now in prison, and he did this "in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing."

And this is in harmony with what is elsewhere recorded. God said of the antediluvians "My *spirit* shall not always strive with man" (Gen. vi, 3); showing that the Holy Spirit was the mighty agency engaged to bring that generation to repentance. And this agency is ascribed to the Holy Spirit as a vital factor in the sacrificial atonement of Christ: "Christ, who *through the eternal Spirit* offered himself without spot to God." Heb. ix, 14. And another passage seems to allude to the preaching of the Gospel to the antediluvians in Noah's time: "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." 1 Pet. iv, 6.

The object of the apostle in 1 Pet. iii, 18-20 was to show that suffering for Christ's sake is not an evidence of badness in the Christian cause, nor of slackness on the part of the divine Lord and Lawgiver, but an unavoidable incident or contingent of the gospel scheme. For if, after the first transgression, the race is put upon a new probation, there must be a temporary suspension of penalty and forbearance with offenses and offenders till their probation or trial is completed. The antediluvians are cited as an example of divine patience, and the goodness of God in giving even them a day of offered grace, but the passage offers no evidence that Christ ever went in person into hades, or that there is even such a place as hades.

The Rheims version (Roman Catholic) gives the passage of 1 Pet. iii, 20, thus: "When they waited for the patience of God in the days of Noah;" as if the antediluvians were, or had been, waiting, waiting in expectation of another day of grace, which should bring reprieve, and in a note of the translators says: "*Spirits in prison.* See here a proof of a third place, or middle state of souls; for these spirits in prison, to whom Christ went to preach, after his death, were not in heaven, nor yet in the hell of the damned; because heaven is no prison, and Christ did not go to preach to the damned." When shall true biblical theology purge itself from these traditional fragments of pagan superstition?

The passage, 1 Cor. iii, 15, "But he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire," has been supposed to teach salvation through or by purgatorial fire. But the language is to be taken simply proverbially, to indicate narrow and perilous escape, as "We went through fire and through water" (Psa. lxvi, 12); "When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned" (Isa. xliii, 2); "Ye were as a brand plucked out of the burning" (Amos iv, 11).

It has been inferred that the words of the Saviour recorded in Matt. xii, 32, imply that there is pardon for the guilty after death, excepting only the blasphemer against the Holy Ghost. The words are: "And whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." But this may be only an intensive form of speech; or we may suppose the Saviour uses an *ad hominem* argument, forcible to his hearers in view of their peculiar faith, though not equally conclusive to men of an opposite faith. It is certain that the Jews did believe that pardon might be obtained after death, and to such an audience his words would have an exceeding fitness, without at all indorsing the doctrine of probation in the life to come.

That souls enter upon their reward immediately after departing this life is clearly attested in Scripture. Thus: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Rev. xiv, 13. That is, those who die in the Lord are blessed *απ ἀρτι*, *from now*, from this time on. Their blessedness begins at death, with an immortality beyond.

The apostle Paul is very explicit in defining the condition of the saints between death and the judgment. He says: "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: . . . we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." 2 Cor. v, 6, 8. Similar is another passage in testimony, Phil. i, 23: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." In these passages the

apostle connects death with "being present with the Lord," "being with Christ;" that is, in personal presence with Christ, for the spiritual presence of Christ he had already. But this could not be said if they were going only to a department of hades, for Christ is not in hades.

It will be seen from the passages given that hades, in the New Testament, always signifies either the grave or region of the dead, or the place of future punishment. In the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) it every-where stands for the Hebrew word *sheol*, and signifies *grave, deep pit, under world*; but never takes the sense of the abode of the righteous. We do not say that the ancients did not attach to the words the idea of a middle place between heaven and hell, into which, in separate apartments, the righteous and the wicked are detained between death and the final judgment; but we say that nowhere in the Bible is there given such a sense to the words.

The passage (Eph. i, 10) is supposed to imply "an ultimate restoration of salvation of all moral beings." The apostle says, "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him."

Observe, first, the eschatological phase of the passages, or the specific time mentioned; namely, "the completion, or fulfillment of the fixed times, or periods." All time is divided into Messianic epochs, of which the gospel epoch is the last. The redemptive epoch, or "time," closes the great mediatorial scheme. We are living in "the last time." The "fullness of the times," the fulfillment, the end or completion, of the gospel period. The date, therefore, carries us down to the end of human probation and gospel opportunities.

Observe, secondly, what is affirmed to take place at that time, namely, “*God shall gather in one* [literally, *under one head*] *the all* [who are] in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth; even in him.” This last clause, “*even in him*,” is simply emphatic of what had been already said, to call special attention to the solemn import of the statement. It does not affirm that all the human race shall be saved, but that all who are in Christ, in heaven and on earth, shall at that time be gathered into one family or fellowship—an event which has never yet been witnessed, and in the nature of things cannot be realized till at the final consummation.

The passage, 1 Cor. xv, 22, has been taken as a promise or declaration that all men will be finally saved. It reads, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Now, an ingenious author says, “The ‘all’ must be as extensive on the one side as on the other,” and hence infers a universal restitution. This might be if the apostle had not signified to the contrary. If the apostle affirmed the restitution of the race with a proviso, and his words are quoted and applied without the proviso, there is a wrong committed, which, if done with knowledge, is a fraud. Now, the words, *ἐν τῷ χριστῷ*, “*in the Christ*,” are a proviso which completely limits the “all” of the race to the “all” of a specified class; to wit, the all who are “*in Christ*.” And this is sustained by other Scriptures on the final restitution. Christ is the restorer to all who are “*in him*.” There is no restitution out of Christ. But the phrase “*in Christ*” denotes a vital spiritual union with him. It is of technical precision, expressive of the state of spiritual life in believers, as opposed to the spiritual death and condemnation in unbelievers. Examine such passages as

1 Thess. ii, 14, 4; iv, 16; Rom. xvi, 7; Gal. i, 22; Eph. i, 10; ii, 5; Rev. xiv, 12, 13, and 2 Tim. ii, 10. The apostle says of the intensive spiritual import of "*in Christ*," "But now, *in Christ Jesus*, ye who some time were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Eph. ii, 13. And directly bearing on the final restitution, he says, "That in the economy of the consummation of the appointed times," as just quoted.

The restrictive force and application of the words "*in Christ*" is further given in the fact that the scope and limitation of the chapter (1 Cor. xv) is an address to the Christians of Corinth. He addresses them as "brethren," "beloved brethren," to whom he had "preached the gospel," "which also," he adds, "ye have received, and wherein ye stand." Vers. 1, 50. But some among them taught "there is no resurrection of the dead." Ver. 12. To meet and confute this error he directed the whole force of his argument. It was *resurrection life* that became the one engrossing theme. It was not whether all men will be saved, but whether the Gospel taught a resurrection to eternal life of the body, thus restoring the whole man, physical and mental. This will appear by giving the distich. Thus:

"For as in Adam all die,  
Even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

The point and scope of the writer in this antithetic couplet is the certainty of the resurrection of the body to a glorified humanity, and that "*in Christ*" only is this ineffable glory attained. Exegetically the passage can carry us no farther. Such a resurrection is not only to be realized as a fact, in its time, but the order of manifestation is given; namely, "Christ the first-fruits; afterward *they that are Christ's* at his coming. Then cometh the end." 1 Cor. xv, 23, 24. The clause,

“They that are Christ’s,” is restrictive and emphatic. They and only they who are Christ’s shall “inherit the life eternal.”

Again, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. ii, 9-11.

The phrase, “*under the earth*,” has been supposed to signify the inhabitants of *hades*, or the subterranean region, being the intermediate state and place of souls between death and the final judgment, and that “it must, therefore, mean that all men, not only all men who now live, but all who have lived, shall finally become Christians, and enter into the glory of God.”\* But this is simply an assumption. The word *καταχθονιος* occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but etymologically (from *κατα*, *downward*, and *χθων*, *the ground*) it signifies *under ground*, and literally answers to our idea of *grave*, *region of the dead*, and does, therefore, like its parallel (Rev. v, 3, 13), imply a Hebraic form of expression for *grave*.

As to the prophetic clause, “Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,” it does not prove that all men will be converted. Men may confess the Lordship of Christ and the truth of revelation from the constraint of conscience. All the facts on this subject are clear and convincing. The prophecies speak of enemies of God and of Christ as subjecting themselves by constraint, not willingly. Thus (Psa. cx, 1), “Jeho-

\* *Orthodoxy: Its Truths and Errors.* By James Freeman Clarke, p. 288.

vah said to Adonee [my Lord], Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool," etc. So in 1 Cor. xv: "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." To put his enemies under his feet is not to convert them, is not to treat them as friends. The enmity to Christ may remain, but his sovereignty and the righteousness of his judgments will be confessed. So, Heb. x, 13, "Christ forever sat down on the right hand of God: from henceforth expecting *till his enemies be made his footstool.*" And, again, the evil spirit "cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone; what have we do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." Mark i, 23, 24; Luke iv, 33, 34. Here we have a correct confession of Christ by an evil spirit, constrained to speak, yet at enmity with God.

The passages which have been cited as favoring the doctrine of an intermediate place we claim to have shown to be inconclusive. In discussing a subject so grave, so fundamental, the most conclusive evidence is demanded. A few passages of doubtful pertinence cannot be admitted as testimony. A few general principles arrayed against the specific legislation of Scripture, and claiming to be older and of higher authority than written revelation, we cannot allow. The doctrines of Holy Scripture are the laws of the moral government and the restitution of the human race, and must, like all legal documents, be interpreted rigidly according to the laws of language. We cannot philosophize; we must interpret. If we abandon exegesis, we have no hope in human reasoning.

It is a most suspicious fact that the doctrine of an intermediate place with that of probation after death and purgatory are, and ever have been, in the interest

of procrastination. Convince a godless man that, do what he will, a new probationary state awaits him in the life to come, wherein equal or increased advantages for repentance and reformation will be enjoyed, and the motive to reform to-day, now, will be swept away, and a life of selfish and vicious indulgences inevitably entailed. Whatever a man of reason and conscience might do, the man of lust and appetite would choose delay of repentance and a godly life.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## CHRIST'S ORDER OF THE NEW CREATION.

Physical Restitution Consummated in the Life to Come—Conflagration of the Earth, Preparatory of the “New Creation.”

IN treating the subject of the restitution as consummated in the life to come, we are limited to two general topics—the physical body of the redeemed, and the physical condition as to the place or planetary orb they are to inhabit. The former leads to the great doctrine of the resurrection, which has already been treated. The latter is now to give what information the books of Revelation and Holy Scripture afford. We will first consider what is said concerning the change to be wrought upon the world we live in.

It will not be denied by those who believe in the inspiration of Holy Scripture that this world has come under a curse for man's disobedience. The original sentence of the Judge stands thus: “And unto Adam he said, . . . cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Gen. iii, 17-19. The language of the prophet reproduces that of the original sentence: “The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away. . . . The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken

the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." Isa. xxiv, 4-6. And thus, also, the apostle: "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. viii, 19-23. (See new version of New Testament, viii, 22.) "And thy wrath is come, . . . that thou shouldest destroy *them that destroy the earth.*" Rev. x, 17, 18. The earth is as one vast mausoleum; as one sepulchral monument of the oppressions, violence, wars, corruptions, sufferings, and wrong committed by her inhabitants and her ruling powers. The memorials of innocent blood, of unavenged wrongs, of covered iniquity, are every-where, in all nations and places. Are these things to continue without end? Will not God visit the earth for all this? Shall not he, "who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity" (Hab. i, 13), do unto the earth as he did to Sodom and the world before the flood? Can complete restitution be accomplished without this? It is due to the Church and to the Redeemer, who have suffered in the world-wide conflict with the pagan and antichristian powers, to efface the memorials of sinful doing. What better can be done to express the divine abhorrence of these wrongs than to purge the earth

by fire, and to refit it for the abode of innocence and holiness? The words of the Lord must settle it. Hear the awful sentence from the apostle Peter:

“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. . . .

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto [earnestly desiring] the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Pet. iii, 1-13.

This wonderful passage covers the whole subject. It should be specially observed that in verse 2 it is as-

serted that the doctrines herein taught were in accord with those "which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and by the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." Peter, therefore, was indorsed by the prophets and the whole college of apostles. It will also be seen that this destruction of the world by fire is dated at the "coming" of Christ, and the "day of judgment," and the "perdition of ungodly men." Ver. 7. The "heavens," here renovated by fire, are the atmosphere, or the region of the clouds, as the word often denotes; and the plural (heavens) is often taken in the singular, as Matt. iii, 2, "Kingdom of *heaven*;" Greek, "kingdom of *heavens*." When the apostle says, "We look for a new heaven and a new earth," he uses the language of faith, of expectation, and desire. The saints have an individual inheritance in that great event, which they are to "hasten unto," or "earnestly desire."\* This is further indicated when he deduces the practical sequence "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?" etc. This practical application evinces the highest assurance of faith in the literality of the doctrines advanced, and furnishes the loftiest motives to a godly life.

As to the present delay of these awful, yet glorious, scenes, it is for the salvation of men, and not from slackness or indifference. "Account," he says, "that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation." And he asserts his perfect accord with Paul in these doctrines

\* On *σπείδω*, translated *earnestly desiring*, see Septuagint on Isa. xvi, 12, and MacKnight and Parkhurst on the word, and the sources they quote. Also the New Version. Robinson says, "With an accusative the word means, *To hasten after* any thing, *to await with eager desire*," and quotes 2 Pet. iii, 12, as an example. See his Lexicon on the word. This exactly meets the case.

by saying: "Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you ; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things." 2 Pet. iii, 15, 16.

The opposers of the doctrine of the destruction of the world by fire were " scoffers, walking after their own lusts," and assuming that the coming of Christ must be heralded by signs in the earth and heavens, and should not be delayed. Ver. 3. This was an old ground taken by unbelievers and enemies of Christ, but it is not a subject with which physical nature or phenomenal nature has any connection. It is all supernatural, totally beyond the legitimate sphere of science or philosophy. It is not competent for science to affirm or deny any thing relating to the fact, the time, the circumstances of the coming of Christ, the judgment, or the final outcome of the mediatorial government. He who made all things can control all things. The question is not one of philosophy, but of power. God has spoken; can he perform? The Creator has not abandoned his right and purpose to make all things subject to moral government, either by precept or penalty. The voice of nature gives no oracle on final destiny. Revelation alone lifts the curtain upon the scenes of the dread "beyond," and Christ alone unfolds its mysteries. He alone has the "keys of death, and of hades." Rev. i, 18. The credibility of divine revelation rests securely upon its own foundation. Moral laws and the laws of material nature present two totally diverse spheres of thought. Christ says his coming will be sudden and without warning.

## CHAPTER XXV.

CHRIST'S ORDER OF THE NEW CREATION.—CONTINUED.

The Marriage of the Lamb—New Jerusalem.

IN the previous chapter we have given us by Peter, indorsed by the entire body of the apostles, the literal conflagration of the earth and atmosphere, in the last days, as a method of expurgation of the marks of sin and violence, and as asserting both the possibility and pledge of such an event. If the deluge in the days of Noah was historic and literal, so also will be the conflagration. If the former effaced from the earth the marks and memorials of the corrupt and violent doings of the people and their rulers, so also shall the fire purge away the footprints of the abominations of the latter. It was not merely the corrupt constitution and form of society that was to be destroyed, but a renovation of the mundane system itself. It was not an annihilation, but a purification, and a new and perfect adaptation to a higher and holier state of being. Thus Christ's first and second advents will prove to have accomplished the two stages of the mighty work of restitution—the earthly and the heavenly, the probationary and the consummation, or state, of the “new creation.” And thus he becomes the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.” Rev. i, 8; xxi, 6.

The date of this new creation, it will be remembered, is after the millennium, after the resurrection, after the judgment-day, after the termination of human probation, into the eternal and unchangeable state.

The further notices of the new creation are as fol-

lows: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. . . . And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Rev. xxi, 1-5; xxii, 13.

The record of chapters xxi and xxii is wholly engrossed with the rewards of the life everlasting. The language is suitable to no other subject or condition, and the chronological order places it there. The emphatic words, "*It is done*" (ver. 6), declare the prophetic record of this great and final scheme of revelation to be now completed. This sense is in harmony with the scope, and the connection. In chapter xvi, 17, the same word occurs, which we must there connect with chapter x, 7, where it was promised that, in the epoch of the seventh trumpet, "the mystery of God should be finished," which promise, we have already seen, has been fulfilled.

In verse 1 it is said, "the first [or former] heaven and the first [or former] earth were passed away." Does this "passing away" possibly refer to chapter xx, 11, where it is said, "The earth and the heavens fled away" from the face of Him that sat on the throne? Might not the sudden disappearance of the old mundane system, in the conflagration already noticed, find

its explanation here? And might not "he that sat upon the throne" (ver. 5), who proclaimed, "Behold, I make all things new," be the same as he who in chapter xx, 11, "sat on the great white throne?" And if so, do we not find a glimmer of light as to when, or at what moment, in the great drama the change occurred, when all things became new? Certainly the hypothesis is possible.

In verse 3 the prophet heard a great voice saying, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them," etc. The "tabernacle of God" among the Jews was the symbol of the divine presence, and his abiding presence is the pledge of all blessing. In the foreground of the picture here given of heaven is God's abiding presence in person and fellowship, as when he walked or talked with the first pair in Eden, before the first transgression.

It is said of the new creation that in it "there was no more sea." This is to be taken figuratively. In symbolic language a sea represents a mass, or multitude, or nationality of people; especially a people beyond the bounds of the Church; that is, a heathen or uncovenanted nation. Thus (Rev xii, 1), "I saw a beast rise out of the *sea*;" that is, he saw a new government rise out of the commotions of the people. So also it is said, "Which stilleth the noise of the *seas*, the noise of their *waves*, and the *tumult of the people*." Psa. lxv, 7. The prophet saw in his vision that in the new creation there was no "sea"—no body of people who were agitable and turbulent, and thereby the source of wrongs and violence and oppression. This statement is the first particular notice given of the elements and characteristic features of the new creation. It had no organized nationality, or people, who could foment public commotion and misrule like the

angry waves of the sea. All were in peace, with an assured perpetuation of safety.

After an inexpressibly tender description of the blessedness of the heavenly state (ver. 3-5) the angel nuncio commands, "Write: for these words are true and faithful." Ver. 5. "*Truth*," says Dr. A. Clarke, "refers to the *promise* of these changes, *faithfulness* to the *fulfillment* of these promises." The specific order to "write" and to asseverate the truth and faithfulness of what had been said, indicates the special importance and literal accuracy of the matter revealed, and the solemnity in which it should be received.

Two subjects, or two symbols of the same subject, present themselves here; to wit, "The marriage of the Lamb" and the "new Jerusalem." The former—the marriage of the Lamb—is first mentioned in chapter xix, 7-9, in the near opening of the millennium, but we have reserved it to be noticed in this connection, there being nothing to forbid it. It is thus given in chapters xix, 6-9, and xxi, 2, 9:

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." And later on it is recorded, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. xxi, 2, and ver. 9:

“And there came unto me one of the seven angels . . . saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

The figure of marriage between God and his people was familiar to Old Testament prophets. Thus Isa. liv, 5: “Thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel.” And in the New Testament the apostle says: “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” 2 Cor. xi, 2. It is not necessary to enlarge on the varied use of Scripture imagery which has its root in the marriage relation, but the common import of the figure is that of oneness of the parties, of honor, and of purity and fidelity of affection.

If we would attain to any just appreciation of the import of the allusion to this ceremony at this juncture of time, we must know what relation the Church now held to the progress of the Gospel, and to the great antichristian powers of the earth, as unfolded in the wondrous chain of prophecy. It was this relation that justified and dictated the strong and beautiful figure of the marriage of Christ with his Church: for “Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Eph. v, 25-27. Thus also their great persecutor through the dark ages—years of antichrist—was denominated “the accuser of our brethren, . . . which accused them before our God day and night.” Chap. xii, 10.

Consider we, then, that the faithful Church had now grappled with antichrist and his servile accomplices during the “time, times, and half a time,” or twelve

hundred and sixty years (Rev. xii, 14), and had overcome "by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. xii, 11. During these long and weary centuries the "beast" and "dragon" and "false prophet," or, otherwise, the "great harlot," "Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots," held sway, and the true Church—that is, the faithful in all times and places—was despised, persecuted, victim of false accusation, bearing its testimony for Jesus at the peril of life, and often the loss of all things. False accusation was at the ground of all its proceedings. Thus, the Lord of life and glory it first accused of blasphemy, and then condemned to death as a blasphemer. So it was with the disciples. They were first accused of "heresy," and then condemned to the stake. Thus the true Church was first made odious by false accusation, and then condemned to torture and death.

But, the judgments of God and the faithful witnesses of his Church concurrently operating, at last the monstrous system of corruption and oppression fell, and the golden age dawned upon the world. The millennium follows upon the downfall of "great Babylon," and it is just here, also, that the "marriage of the Lamb" is introduced. Marriage, by the consent of mankind, is an occasion of joy, and honorable tokens of gratulation. The symbolic marriage denotes purity, fidelity, and the complete union of Christ and his Church. The Church had been scandalized, hated, despised, and persecuted by the nations because she had stood firm and faithful in her betrothment to Christ (mentioned chapter xix, 7-9), while the hostile nations were seduced by the "false prophet" to play the harlot, and to "give their power and strength unto the beast," and had "made war with the Lamb, and the Lamb had overcome them: for

he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” Rev. xvii, 13, 14.

The marriage is public. Before the universe the nuptial bond is ratified. It is for the honor both of Christ and the Church; the former to show that he had not forsaken his spouse in the years of her oppression, the latter to witness that she had not been unfaithful to her Lord. The universe of men and angels will now witness that she that had been calumniated and despised, by those who had, with infinite hypocrisy, professed to believe they were doing God service by persecuting his faithful Church, is the beloved of Christ, and precious as the jewelry of his crown. “And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” Mal. iii, 17.

From a comparison of Rev. xix, 7, with chapter xxi, 2, it would appear that on two occasions the Church is publicly manifested as the bride of the Lamb; the first at the opening of the millennium, as an announcement soon to be fulfilled (xix, 7), and the second after the millennium—after the resurrection, after the judgment day—in the distribution of final rewards, as one of the acts of public vindication and reward. Chap. xxi, 2, 7. The import of the marriage has the force of an eternal and unchangeable fiat, a bond never to be broken, that declares the union of Christ and his redeemed and hallowed Church to be indissoluble and forever. The scene transcends description. Christ will appear in his unveiled glory, “the glory which he had with the Father before the world was” (John xvii, 5), and “every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.” Rev. i, 7.

As to the Church (the bride), the days of her mourn-

ing are ended. Emphatically her Lord and Maker has become her protector, her husband. "And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." Rev. xix, 7, 9.

What has been already quoted from chapter xix, 7-9, we have assumed is an announcement of what is soon to take place, but it leaves the Church in the opening of its millennial glory, in its historic connections and surroundings, charged with the invitations of the divine commission: "The Spirit and the bride (Church) say, Come" (chap. xxii, 17), and the encouragement, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Chap. xix, 9. The world is at peace, the antichristian powers are overthrown, Satan is bound, the "King of kings and Lord of lords" leads forth his triumphant hosts—it is heaven begun. We read of no persecutions, no apostates thereafter, though all are not converted. Read carefully Rev. xix, and xx, 1-4. We must preserve here the chronological order of events.

But now a new scene opens in this gorgeous drama. It is thus given: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. . . . And he [the angel] carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even as a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Rev. xxi, 2, 10, 11.

The scene in which the dramatic vision lay was in the "new heaven and new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. . . . And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Ver. 1, 5. All the literal explanations of the vision

determine the date of it to be after the final judgment day, and the specific characteristics to belong to the final rewards. As to the symbol of the new or heavenly Jerusalem, the apostle Paul calls it “the Jerusalem which is above, which is our mother.” Gal. iv, 26. This “new Jerusalem,” the “holy city,” unquestionably represents the true and faithful and spiritual society or Church of God. And thus it is explained (Rev. iii, 12), “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”

Both here and in chap. xxi, 2, the new Jerusalem is represented as “coming down from God out of heaven.”

All that the world knows of things most precious and costly, all that is most tasteful, pure, elegant, and grand, in material or architecture, in art or nature, is here brought together and worked into a gorgeous picture, to illustrate the beauty and grandeur of that heavenly Jerusalem. The picture of the holy city extends throughout chapters xxi and xxii, 1-6. Who shall define and describe the mystery and glory of this wondrous vision? From all the light afforded it would seem that the Holy Spirit would describe the glorified Church in its twofold state; namely, its spiritual character and its external forms and condition. Both these elements enter fully into chapters xxi and xxii. It is remarkable that, in describing the glory of the full reward of the Church, a little earlier than the date of the Apocalypse, John could only say, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.”

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE LITERALITY AND EDENIC TYPE OF CHRIST'S RESTITUTION.

THERE are no sufficiently revealed data to authorize a positive opinion as to what point of time, in the unfolding drama, the destruction of the old mundane system will take place; but what is written assures us that it will not occur till after the millennium, and after the battle of Gog and Magog. That is, it will not be till the earth has ceased to be inhabited, and the final judgment shall sit. There is a passage which seems to favor the thought that it will be simultaneous with the summons to the final judgment. The passage is thus given: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." Rev. xx, 11. Unquestionably this is a final judgment scene, embracing verses 11-15. Nothing equals it in awful grandeur save Matt. xxv, 31-46. The "sixth seal" (Rev. vi, 12-17) is not its parallel, and its imagery is of quite a different type. (See it in its place.) The final judgment is often alluded to in the New Testament, but the judgment *scene* is but partially attempted. Who but Christ, who has "the keys of death and of hades," can unfold the awful mystery? We tread cautiously, on holy ground.

We would reverently suggest whether this disappearance of the "earth's atmosphere," or "earth and the heaven," might not be intended to corroborate and fulfill the more detailed and specific account given by

the apostle Peter in his second epistle, chapter iii, of the world's conflagration. This would meet the fitness of time. It would date at the final judgment, and the calling away of the saints, who "shall be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they be ever with the Lord." 1 Thess. iv, 17. And the language does not contradict it.

Immediately after this, and next in order, the apostle says, "*I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away;*" or unconverted and hostile people. Rev. xxi, 1. This is a strong corroboration of the hypothesis given. So also is the language of Peter: "*Looking for and hastening unto [earnestly desiring] the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*" 2 Pet. iii, 12, 13. The time for this renovation by fire is at "*the coming of the day of God,*" the same as the second coming of Christ. The ultimate effect sought was the new heaven and earth, "*wherein dwelleth righteousness.*"

Again, John says: "*And he that sat upon the throne [that is, he that is mentioned in chapter xx, 11] said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done.*" Rev. xxi, 5, 6. The same divine person further speaks: "*Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*" Rev. xxii, 10, 12.

These are words of destiny, and clearly assert the

end of probation to the race. These words, "*It is done*," are profoundly awful. They declare the prophetic record of this great and final scheme of revelation, with the total work of redemption, to be now finished, and the destinies of mankind unalterably fixed. As the world's atonement was announced upon the cross by the Son of God, "*It is finished*" (John xix, 30), so now the full work of redemption, with its final terminus, is declared in the same words, and by the same authority. We must take chapter xxii, 11, as a repetition and enlargement of this most solemn announcement, "*It is done*." Chap. xxi, 6. As to the statement, "And there was no more sea," we may remark that, in symbolic language, "sea" denotes multitudes of people, especially people in a state of war or revolution. An agitated mass of people. But those are now "destroyed who destroyed the earth." Rev. xi, 18. We have already given the meaning of this symbol.

The reader will keep in mind that we are now speaking of the restitution, the restoring things to their primeval state. This is the object and purpose of redemption. The last two chapters of Revelation are devoted exclusively to this subject. We are here led to consider both the *character* and *condition* of the redeemed and the *extent* and *limitation* of the restitution.

We would not speculate upon themes and possibilities left solely to the realm of direct revelation, but the attention is often referred by the sacred writers to the earth as the future prepared abode of the righteous, and as their "new heaven and new earth." We affirm nothing which they have not affirmed; what seems to us probable we aim to treat as such. And still the whole array of restitutive process would seem to indicate the literality of this "new heaven and new

earth," and to have a history in the post-millennial age. What else can we make of the *οὐρανον καινὸν καὶ γῆν καινήν*, "a new heaven and a new earth?" Plainly *καινὸν*, *new*, must be construed radically, and substantively.

It may not flatter the extravagant anticipations of many, as to the future abode of the blessed, to call attention to the frequent references of this planetary orb, as possibly serving a part of the restitutive demand. The language runs thus: "Behold I make all things new;" "The former things are passed away;" "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away;" "The earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them;" "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the judgment and perdition of ungodly men;" "Seeing then that all things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness," etc. "But the end of all things is at hand;" "So shall it be in the end of this world," or dispensation.

Have not these and such like Scriptures a significance—a meaning equal to the language and metaphors employed—a meaning "ready to be revealed at the last time?" And can restitution be adequate with less than this? Emphatically, and in allusion to Gen. iii, 17—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake"—is it declared of the earth, "And there shall be no more curse." Rev. xxii, 3. The closing chapters of the Apocalypse, it must be admitted, fully teach the restitution of the earth and atmosphere, as co-extensive with the restitution of the righteous.

We have spoken mostly in general terms, but, to be more specific, we remark, three elements seem to limit

and complete the final restitution; namely, 1, The physical constitution of the righteous; 2, the paradisaical type of their place of abode; 3, the spiritual and holy character of the restitution.

First, the physical condition of those who are finally saved is indicated in such language as the following: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. . . . And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. xxi, 4, and xxii, 5.

Secondly, the paradisaical type of their place of abode. The reference, Rev. xxii, 1, "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," must either be to the river Gihon, in the Garden of Eden (Gen. ii, 13), or to the vision of Ezekiel (chap. xlvi, 1), laid in the temple facing the east. He says: "He brought me again unto the door of the house [temple]; and, behold, waters issued out *from under the threshold of the house [temple]* eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down *from under, from the right side [east] of the house, at the south side of the altar.*" That is, the course of the river is first south, then east under the temple area, then south-east to the Dead Sea; meanwhile it had become "a river that could not be passed over," and wherever it went it restored both vegetable and animal life in great abundance. Ver. 5. "And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat [food], whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed." Ver. 12. Both Ezekiel and John describe

the same phenomena, namely, the flowing of a copious stream or river eastward, under the temple, under the "holy of holies," from under "the throne of God," and then, taking a direction southward into the desert, fertilized the obstinate desert wherever it went. The further vision of the prophet Zechariah is similar and corroborative: "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea [Eastern Sea, or Dead Sea], and half of them toward the hinder sea [Western Sea, or Mediterranean]: in summer and in winter shall it be." Zech. xiv, 8. The fundamental idea of this symbolic language is its life-giving power, as perennial water to a thirsty land, emanating from the throne of God. So the psalmist speaks: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." Psa. xlvi, 4. Also, Isaiah speaks of it: "This people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly." Isa. viii, 6. The same also is probably referred to in 2 Kings xx, 20: And Hezekiah "made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city." All indications harmonize in the supposition that the Shiloh of Hezekiah is referred to, which modern discovery identifies to be the subterranean, perennial flow heading near the Damascus gate and running south till, opposite midway of the temple arena, it turns eastward to the ancient temple site, supplying the mysterious waters under the rock es-Sukrah, thence southward to the great el-Aksa pool, thence still underground to the virgin pool and the pool of Siloam, and thence south-easterly to the Dead Sea. It is remarkable that the course of this wondrous stream or river passes directly under the ancient temple, under the "holy of holies," where, between the cherubim, was "the throne of God," an-

swering, so far as the import of symbols is concerned, to the "pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," of John the revelator, or, as Ezek. xlvi, 1, has it, "*from under the threshold of the house, [temple] eastward.*" Zechariah has it, "In that day living waters [waters of life] *shall go out from Jerusalem*," etc. Zech. xiv, 8.

It is evident that the passage of Rev. xxii, 1, is borrowed from the Old Testament symbolism, and it seems probable that the flow of living waters from under the throne is explained as above to denote that now, in the great restitution, life prevails where death reigned before.

"There is a stream whose gentle flow  
Supplies the city of our God;  
Life, love, and joy, still gliding through,  
And watering our divine abode."

Milton calls it:

"Siloa's brook that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God."\*

"In relation to all the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem," says a cautious scholar, "the abundance and inexhaustible fund of their happiness is described in Rev. xxii, 1, by their having a river of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. As the first paradise is represented by a river that went out of Eden to water the country, and as Ezekiel, in his prophetic vision of a new city and temple, represents water in great plenty flowing from the house or temple, so it is here. Water being necessary to the support of life, contributing to refreshment, ornament, and delight, is eloquently made a figure to express the

\*See note on Psa. xlvi, 4, in my commentary on Psalms.

glorious and happy immortality of all true Christians in the heavenly state.”\*

As the rivers of Eden (Gen. ii, 10) were “for watering the garden,” giving life, freshness, and beauty to all, it became a suitable symbol for denoting the state of the saints in the new creation. The figure of a river “proceeding out of the throne of God” is also explained.

The physical condition of the righteous in the “new creation,” or restitution, continues with imposing imagery, and the primeval Eden is richly thrown upon the scene. The symbolic character of the language must not, for a moment, be overlooked. The revelator thus speaks: “In the midst of the street [or *broad way*] of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” Chap. xxii, 2.

The “street,” or *broad way*, refers to the city in chapter xxi. The “tree of life” refers us directly to the scene in Eden. Gen. iii, 22. The narrative shows that man’s physical immortality, his exemption from natural death, by what cause or on what principle is not given, depended on the fact of his access to the tree of life; hence, restoring the “right to the tree of life” is restoring the right “to enter in through the gates into the city.” Ver. 14. These are restituted rights, restored and warranted by gospel authority. In the same verse it is said that “the leaves of the tree [of life] were for the healing of the nations.” The language is simply equal to the restoration of the tree of life, already mentioned. In verse 3 we have a further assurance of restitution in reversing the sentence of the “curse”

\* *Symbolical Dict.*, by Daubuz, Vitringa, and others; edited by Thomas Wemys.

mentioned in Gen. iii, 17, thus obliterating the last form and fact of the punishment of transgression, and restoring all things to their pristine glory.

In chap. xxi, 4, 5, the external condition of the saints is thus given: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

But paradise would be but partially restored—restored only in its secondary and lesser attractions—if left here. The essence of the eternal glory—the crowning excellence of the heavenly state—is the soul's communion and fellowship with God. "Partakers of the divine nature," or moral excellence, says Peter; and, as John says, "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 2 Pet. i, 4; 1 John iii, 2. Participation in the divine moral image and excellence is the true "fountain of life." Herein is realized the ultimate end of our being, the quality and summit of our perfection.

Viewed in its totality, as an organized body, the true Church universal is compared, in the twenty-first chapter, to the "new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." The spiritual, personal, visible presence of God with his people is thus given: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. . . . He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. . . . And I saw no temple therein [in the new Jerusalem]: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the tem-

ple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it. . . . And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. . . . And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

Rev. xxi, 2, 3, 7, 22-24, 27; xxii, 3-5.

It is impossible to mistake the transcendent holiness and happiness of the saints in their new abode, in the personal presence of God and the Lamb. The language covers the whole subject. The literal and personal dwelling with God and Christ is fully asserted. It was heaven before, but now in greater fullness. With resurrected bodies and the final rewards bestowed, their joys are complete. This is heaven in its fullness. The symbols cannot be mistaken. Nothing less can meet the restoration. We must accept it *in toto*, or cast it aside as a myth and a fraud. The restitution is as extensive as the reconciliation. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Chap. xxi, 8.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## A SPIRITUAL CHANGE REQUIRED.

Christ provides for and requires a spiritual change by the Holy Spirit as the ethical part of the restitution required.

THE light in which the ultimate achievements of the Gospel of Christ are reviewed is, as already stated, that of a divine restitution, or new creation—the restoring things to their primitive state. The system of redemption is a scheme, or plan, by the provisions of which God can be just in pardoning sin and in reinstating the offender, now penitent and submissive, in all the immunities of law and privilege forfeited by sin. The moral relations of our race to God and moral government are hereby restored, and the disrupted purposes of God (we speak as a man) in his creation resumed, conditioned only by acceptance of the Gospel plan. In no other sense could it be called by the emphatic word a redemption; for a redemption implies a forfeiture, a ransom price, and a restoration. The restitution sought and promised is twofold; namely, that which we are to experience in this life and that which is in reserve for the life which is to come; and, taken into one view, it comprehends the most exalted state of our nature, in respect of both character and condition, conceivable. Our Saviour speaks of it thus: “In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel,” and denominates it to be “*in the regeneration*,” which is the same as “a new creation,” or a restitution. Matt. xix, 28.

In treating the subject we first speak of that part of the restitution which is to be experienced in this life. The very notion of a restitution, as applied to our race, supposes, as we have said, a primeval condition of happiness from which man by transgression has fallen. The end or design of God in creation was essential goodness, and that goodness must be realized by the creature only in fellowship with the Creator. Moral law was the exponent and standard of the good, and defined the lines by which man should achieve the ends of his creation, as is expressly stated in Scripture. It is that which God wills or chooses for man. This, in their worship, the heavenly beings recognize and confess. Thus: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy *pleasure* [or, *for thy will*, or for that which thou willest] they are and were created." Rev. iv, 11. The word translated *pleasure* is the standing word for *will*. God's will is the law of the moral universe, comprehending all that is good to man and moral beings. It was their birthright by creation, but now forfeited only by disobedience. "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin."

Now, we repeat it, all salvation, or redemption, is of the nature of *restitution*, or *restoration*; the putting of things back as they were in their normal, or, more properly, their primeval, state. Christ, undertakes this work, and hence, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [or *creation*]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. v, 17. "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Col. iii, 9, 10. This defines the process of restitution, so far as it respects its first and earthly stage. The whole ego—

body, soul, and spirit—is taken out from under the dominion of sin and placed in the new and renewed relation to God and moral law as one who is “alive from the dead.” The moral nature being thus renewed and purged from sin, by a change equal to a new creation, now waits “for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body;” or, as the apostle again says, waiting “for the manifestation of the sons of God.” Rom. viii, 23, 19. This last form—“the *manifestation* of the sons of God”—is simply an eschatological phrase, and is parallel to the passages “Waiting for the *coming* of our Lord” (1 Cor. i, 7); or, “When his [Christ’s] glory shall be *revealed*” (1 Pet. iv, 13); or, “Salvation ready to be *revealed* in the last time” (1 Pet. i, 5); and such like phrases. The word *apocalypsis*, though variously translated, is identical in meaning in all.

The Scriptures bearing upon the point of our argument, that the spiritual regeneration here upon the earth is, in so far, a restitution, are too numerous to render here. But, morally, provision is made, in the redemptive economy, for the sanctification and new life in Christ for all men, and is thus explained by the apostle: “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. . . . But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” And again: “Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Eph. ii, 1, 4-6, and v, 25-27.

This moral and spiritual restoration is not at all inferior in rank or magnitude or divine creative origin to the second stage of the great restitution, which completes the grand and glorious scheme of redemption. The first stage relates to man during his probationary earthly life; the second to his future and immortal state. The first is limited chiefly to the moral and intellectual sphere; the second stage comprehends not only the more perfect advancement of the moral and intellectual nature, but the wide range of what we may denominate the perfect external conditions, adaptations, and appetency of our being in the resurrection and the “new creation.”

The apostle Peter uses the word *restitution* in its broadest sense, embracing the restitutive process belonging to this life, and also to that which is to come. Thus: “Jesus Christ, . . . whom the heaven must receive, until the *times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*” Acts iii, 20, 21.

And speaking of John Baptist, the attending angel touched the salient points of his mission: “And he [John] shall go before him [Christ] in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to [or with] the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Luke i, 17.

The attitude of the Church universal toward the human race, in this period of probation, is that of invitation and warning: “And the Spirit and the bride [the Church] say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. . . . He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Rev. xxii, 17, 20.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## THE END OF GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

Christ “delivers up the kingdom to God, even the Father.”

THE only way to understand the sublime import of the subject of this chapter is to interpret it literally, or, as we should say, historically. This simplest method is the only one. The apostle Paul has stated it thus: “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. . . . And when all things be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” 1 Cor. xv, 24-28.

“*The end*,”  $\tauὸ\ τέλος$ , here marks the final terminus of the gospel period, at which juncture Christ will have accomplished the purposes of his mediation, and now “delivers up the kingdom to God, even the Father.” This “kingdom” is the mediatorial kingdom; that is, the administration of the moral government on the basis of atonement and the provisions of gospel grace. Christ received this investiture of regal authority at the moment that infinite wisdom determined the gospel plan, and holds it till the end of offered mercy shall be accomplished. The language is very explicit: “He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” Then, “when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power,” “he shall deliver up the kingdom

to God, even the Father." "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." That is, upon the consummation of the gospel scheme the functions of the mediatorial office are now no longer required, or, rather, have been fulfilled, and Christ, as mediatorial king, resigns back the well-accomplished office to the Father, and the moral government resumes its former status as before the fall.

There are two epochs, then, or measurements of time, which fully sustain this view, and vindicate the doctrines here set forth; the one *dates* the gospel plan, the other *consummates* it. John brings to view the former, thus: "In the beginning [*ἐν ἀρχῇ*] was the Word." John i, i. The Septuagint Greek has the same epoch. Gen. i, 1. "In the beginning [*ἐν αρχῇ*] God created," etc.; and in each is found the primal date of all things, in the sublime Hebrew utterance:

"In the beginning [*בָּרָא שָׁמַיִם*] God created," etc. It will be observed that Moses gives the date of creation as relates to the history of our race; John gives the date of Christ, the eternal Word, as he first appeared with the Father in his relation both to creation and to redemption. In John i, 1-14, the sublime exhibit has nothing to surpass it.

This twofold date of the first and of the last—the beginning and the consummation—is richly set forth by Christ as his own descriptive title of Lord of the universe. Thus Christ asserts himself to be the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev. i, 8. And in verse 11: "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." And in chapter ii, 8, "These things saith the first and the last."

And in chapter xxi, 6, "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." And chapter xxii, 13, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

These titles, in their broad sweep of meaning, identify Christ with both the *origin* and the *conclusion* of the gospel dispensation. John the apostle says of Christ: "The same was in the beginning with God" (John i, 2); and Paul says: "Then cometh the end, when he [Christ] shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." 1 Cor. xv, 24. And thus Christ comprehends in himself the extreme limits and functions vital to the gospel dispensation. And thus the prophet of old declares it: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. ix, 6.

We shall not reach satisfactory results here unless we adopt and clearly apprehend the Gospel as a provisional act, or scheme, for a specific end and time, which, having been accomplished, is to pass away. The results are abiding, eternal, but the methods are provisional, and this proviso is, in government and ethics, as commanding and abiding as fundamental law. We must mark the distinction between the moral government administered upon principles of pure, essential law, such as before the fall, and moral government administered upon a proviso—namely, the atonement; which suffers for a time with transgression, and even provides a system of suasive influences to induce men to repent, and thereby escape penalty and become reconciled to God the Lawgiver. But let no one mistake the character of God and of moral government, and presume that God, having shown so great mercy toward

offenders, will easily abate punishment to the guilty; not considering that pardon offered with proviso cannot be obtained without proviso. Salvation offered on condition, cannot be claimed but on condition. "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked." Nah. i, 2, 3.

There is a class of passages directly supportive of the doctrine before us which we have not hitherto called up. We speak of the word *πέμπω*, *send*, as a word designating the commission of the Saviour both in its breadth and its continuance. We are not to judge of this unpretentious title by its common use, but by what is said and affirmed of him and by him in holy Scripture.

We adduce a few passages illustrative of our meaning. Thus: Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of him that *sent* me, and to *finish his work*" (John iv, 34; v, 30, 36, 37); "The father that *sent* me beareth witness of me" (viii, 16, 18); "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath *sent* me draw him" (vi, 44); "That the world may believe that thou hast *sent* me" (John xvii, 21); "As thou [the father] hast *sent me* [the Son] into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (ver. 18); "The Father loveth the Son, and hath *given all things into his hand*" (iii, 35); "*All things are delivered unto me of my Father*: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt. xi, 27.

These, with numerous other kindred passages which we need not quote, fully support the doctrine that the dispensation of grace, the total gospel plan, devolved

for execution upon Christ, the son of God, the second person in the adorable Trinity. And thus, when the time for his first advent had arrived, it is said: "When the fullness of the time was come, *God sent forth his Son*, made of a woman, made under the law," etc. Gal. iv, 4. This difference of the two advents, so widely apart in their times of manifestation, and the specific objects of their coming, must be carefully kept distinct.

We have already stated that the entire scheme of gospel grace is limited and marked by epochs, some of which have (most of which have) passed, and some sub-periods are yet to come. But the whole is marked by traceable limitations. The Saviour has all the epochs and all the world-movements in his hands and in his power, and when he was upon the earth he often referred to this fact, but they did not fully comprehend him. He had a work to do which, when performed, the "end of the world would come." "I have a baptism," says Jesus, "to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Luke xii, 50. Although this referred more directly to his death, which he was to offer for the world's atonement, yet it has an onward outlook to the end of all things.

The great work of redemption had followed events along down the ages, and the strong and mighty Saviour, faithful to the work he had assumed, is fast closing up the avenues of world-powers preparative of his finished work.

The now unfinished work of the Redeemer will come in its time, in all its beauty and grandeur. The Lord of glory thus speaks concerning it: "The works which the Father hath given me *to finish*, the same works that I do." John v, 36. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, *and to finish his work.*" John iv, 3.

“Looking unto Jesus, the author [beginner] and finisher of our faith.” Heb. xii, 2.

The thought we wish here to present is that Christ comes in his second advent to “*finish*” the work to which all previous dispensations have pointed, and which they have promised. For this Christ was commissioned, and “*sent*” into the world. For this the title of “Alpha and Omega, the *beginning* and the *end*, the first and the last” was given. On this hypothesis all eschatology must rest.

“The new creation of the Spirit begins immediately upon the day of Pentecost, in simple and gradual fulfillments of what had before been written: the whole typical history of Israel is reproduced in its essential reality in the true Israel of God, and will go on till the new heaven and the new earth are created, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”\*

There is a slight analogy to the present subject found in the exigencies of human governments which we refer to, not as a perfect illustration, but as a slight resemblance. We refer to the practice, in times of great public peril, of concentration of power in one man till the danger shall be past. The Romans had a custom, in times of great peril, of concentrating all power of government in one man, for a given time, whom they called a dictator, and when the war was over, and the danger past, the extreme power was resigned and the ordinary functions of government resumed. And thus will it be with Christ our Lord. He assumes the chiefest heights of governing power for our cause, and will, when the fixed hour comes, resign the mediatorial power. “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority

\* Stier’s *Words of the Lord Jesus*, vol. i, p. 137.

and power." 1 Cor. xv, 24. And thus with all the epochs. Christ will not violently destroy the dispensational epochs, but will fulfill them. He says: "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Matt. v, 17, 18. This language of the Saviour does not limit its application to the Mosaic economy only, but to the outmost limit of revelation, and Christ, as Lord and royal executive of the moral government, gives ample assurance of faithful enforcement of the law and the promises.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

## CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

Considered as Supplying an Incentive to Holy Living, and the Law of Christian Activity.

THE second coming, or advent, of our Lord Jesus Christ is less the theme of the pulpit and of Christian thought as a pending reality and less the daily topic of devout and saintly conversation now than in apostolic times, or even fifty years ago. A darker spot on our spiritual horizon has not appeared! A salutary awakening is, however, dawning upon the churches—“The venerated Dr. Archibald Alexander was accustomed to say that, although he understood but little of the Apocalypse, he perused it constantly, because a special blessing was promised to those who read it.”\* This is a genuine profession and practice. Faith is as reasonable a ground of action as knowledge, and this applies to temporal things as to spiritual.

Both Christ and his apostles were faithful to treat this doctrine as of fundamental and practical importance. It was to be a beacon-light, a daily admonition and realization of readiness and joyful expectation, “till he come.” As a motion to readiness to meet the Lord, it is the concentration of all suasive gospel truth—a principle of action which focalizes all others. As a law of action it must, also, be familiar, of ready apprehension, undoubted, authoritative; clearly binding as any law of the decalogue. The truth for daily

\* Dr. Ramsey's *Spiritual Kingdom*. Introduction by Dr. Hoge, page 11.

thought must lie on the surface, for the common mind, and for ready appeal to the written word.

We begin our citations with the words of Christ: "Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. . . . Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. . . . Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. . . . But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. xxiv, 42-51. "Be patient, therefore, brethren, *unto the coming of the Lord*. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: *for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh*." Jas. v, 7, 8. Peter, in the same strain of admonition and exhortation, speaking directly and specifically of the last day and the coming of Christ, or "the day of the Lord," says: "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God?" He also warns the churches "that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Pet. iii, 3-12. He assures them also that at his coming great changes shall be wrought upon the earth, even a "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness;" in view of which expectation he says: "Wherefore, beloved, *seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him*

*in peace, without spot and blameless.*" Ver. 14. And again, his earnest soul warns them, "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." Ver. 17.

There is a remarkable force in Paul's words (1 Thess. ii, 19): "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the *presence* of our Lord Jesus Christ *at his coming?*" The word rendered *presence* is the same as is translated *before*, or in the immediate presence (Matt. xxv, 32): "*before* him shall be gathered," etc., and as that was a final judgment-scene so is this; as if Paul had said, "Our hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing are even ye yourselves when ye stand in the immediate presence of the Lord Jesus Christ *at his coming.*" His rejoicing did not culminate in their conversion, but in their final acquittal and approval before Christ the Judge, when "the Son of man shall come in his glory, and sit upon the throne of his glory." The same allusion occurs in Jude 24, 25: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless *before the presence of his glory* with exceeding joy," etc. Here the soul is brought directly into, or "*before*," the presence of Christ the Judge for final reward. He has been "*kept from falling*" by Christ during his probationary period, and now is "*set before the presence of Christ's glory with exceeding joy.*"

To the same effect is the prayer of Paul in 1 Thess. v, 23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless *unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

In these and a multitude of other passages of kindred import the period of watching and praying and suffer-

ing with Christ is to precede his coming, and during this probationary period the coming of Christ is to be kept before the eye of faith and hope as a leading object of desire and expectation; the fundamental motive power to keep alive the words and work of Christ, and live in instant readiness for his appearing. Every-where the coming of Christ is associated with the final, everlasting reward of the righteous.

There is one hortatory item in this glorious second advent which should be noticed here. The coming of Christ is in various places spoken of as near at hand. Thus, Jas. v. 8, "The coming of the Lord *draweth nigh.*" Phil. iv, 5, "The Lord is *at hand.*" Heb. x, 25-37: "But exhorting one another: and so much the more as *ye see the day approaching.* . . . For yet a little while and *he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*" 1 Pet. iv, 7: "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." "Behold, I come quickly. . . . He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." Rev. xxii, 10, 20. Rev. i, 3: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: *for the time is at hand.*" Rev. xxii, 7, 10, 12, 20: "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: *for the time is at hand.*" "And behold I come quickly." "He which testifieth these things saith, *Surely I come quickly.*"

From these and such like passages there have been those in all ages of the Christian Church who have inferred that the "second coming" is literally imminent, or, as we speak of events, as within a few solar years. But now, after eighteen hundred years, these predictions remain unfulfilled, the long looked for Saviour

has not yet appeared. Undoubtedly there is a ground of interpretation of these most solemn words of promise which harmonizes all things, and confirms the most literal meaning of prophecy. We tread reverently on this holy ground, as Moses at the burning bush.

1. And first, it is in harmony with the analogy of Messianic prophecy to take time for the fulfillment of its predictions and dispensations. Thus the patriarchal dispensation stood twenty-five hundred and fifty years, and terminated in that of Moses; the Mosaic stood fourteen hundred and fifty, and terminated in that of Christ; and the Christian dispensation, which has stood nearly two thousand years. During all these leading dispensations, or periods, a lively hope of Messiah was kept before the eye of faith, with different, though ever increasing, degrees of light. The Messiah and his times were often brought before the mind and described as a living reality.

2. The apostle Paul specifically declares that the coming of Christ was then, at that time, in the indefinite future. Hear him: "Now, we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is now present; let no man beguile you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a *falling away* [Greek, *apostasy*] first, and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition," etc. 2 Thess. ii, 1-10. The "man of sin" and the "apostasy" are simultaneous, and must be dated, in their working and the shaping of their individuality, not later than the fifth century, especially the last half of the fifth century. But of the date of the "destruction" of the man of sin whom the "Lord shall consume with the spirit of his

mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming," the apostle does not speak. Yet he warns his brethren, in view of the shortness of time, to faithfulness. He says: "Ye see the day approaching." Heb. x, 25. From all this it is evident that there is on this subject in the mind of infinite Wisdom somewhere a ground of harmony and consistency.

3. Every thing depends upon the point of view from which the inspired writers utter their admonitions as to the shortness of the time till the advent and epiphany of the Son of man. If we look at these things as God does, with whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. iii, 8), we shall see the reason for counting the Messianic epochs as short. They are short as compared with the eternity of consequences beyond; short as compared with the work to be accomplished and the events to transpire within their respective limits; short to each soul separately when it is considered that the terminus of human life,—the only years of gracious opportunity,—connects practically with the coming of Christ and the solemnities of the final judgment. The predicted shortness of time, therefore, is comparative shortness.

4. Added to all, and the true ground of harmony in all, is faith. Faith annihilates time and space, and gives us

*"Future and past subsisting now."*

It is the office of faith to realize—make real—the things unseen and spiritual. It is "the assurance of things hoped for, the knowing [by test or trial] of things not seen." Heb. xi, 1. New Version. With this "strong commanding evidence" of the things

" Unknown to feeble sense,  
Useen by reason's glimmering ray,"

the soul is swayed and bowed in obedient will, as if the unseen were visible to the natural eye. Thus Moses acted, and “endured seeing him who is invisible.” Heb. xi, 27. Faith is as strong as a principle of action, as knowledge, and as rational and legitimate. Faith brings the second advent of the Saviour near. Its realities are anticipated, and the true believer walks and lives in the midst of scenes all fresh and glorious. The soul is brought in conscious sympathy and fellowship with Christ, and with his great redemptive plan; and this oneness absolves and annihilates the accidents of time and distance. His faith is not founded in circumstances, but in the word of God. The child thinks that to be long which the man accepts as near at hand. And by faith the Christian sees in advance

“The grand millennial reign begun.”

It is thus we are warranted in counting the “latter day” epoch or dispensation as short. All the previous prophetic periods had an outlook of an age beyond; but now we have reached the last hill-top, whose ample sweep of vision is bounded only by the final and the eternal. Hitherto redemption has been carried forward as an unfinished work, unfolding its richness and its methods in progressive steps. Now the grand consummation is fully in sight, and “the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts iii, 21) are upon us, “even at the door.”

“Wherefore, beloved, steeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” 2 Peter iii, 14. “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Rev. xxii, 20.







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